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# A HISTORY OF CRICKET

1848-1949



*from the painting by Arch. S. Wortley, by kind permission of the Committee of the M.C.C.*

W. G. GRACE



*[Sport & General Press Agency]*

DENIS COMPTON

# HISTORY OF CRICKET

by

H. S. ALTHAM and E. W. SWANTON

with an Introduction by  
SIR PELHAM WARNER

London

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## INTRODUCTION

THE first edition of this book was published in 1926, and this, the fourth edition, appears on the eve of the arrival of the most formidable of our cricketing kinsmen. There could be no more appropriate moment. In 1926, after many long years of waiting and disappointment, on a memorable afternoon at Kennington Oval, we regained the Ashes, and, maybe, the publication of this edition will be followed by an equally happy result from an English point of view. But these things lie on the knees of the gods, and, in some degree, on the knees of Denis Compton! In what better hands could a history of cricket be than in those of Mr. H. S. Altham and Mr. E. W. Swanton? Mr. Altham has a deep knowledge of the game; he possesses a marked historical sense and a style of writing so vivid that the incidents and personalities described are as of Yesterday. He charms and fascinates. He is the Churchill of Cricket. Mr. Swanton has made a name for himself by his admirable, accurate, and well balanced articles in the *Daily Telegraph*. There could be no better Chief of Staff. This is the greatest book ever written on Cricket.

The greatest of Harrovians in a speech at Harrow, recently emphasized the value of the reading of history, and although he was, of course, speaking of life from a more serious aspect than that of a mere game—but what a game!—it is not to be denied that a knowledge of Cricket history and of its outstanding figures and personalities enriches the mental attitude of the lover of cricket. At the same time it affords him hours of pleasant reading, and teaches him much in the arts of captaincy and leadership both on and off the field.

That great scholar, man of letters and lover of cricket, Andrew Lang, is reported to have said that cricket was invented when "one monkey threw a stone at another!" Mr. Altham does not delve quite so deeply as this, but the reader will be able to trace the origins of the game, its early beginnings and struggles, and its gradual rise to become an institution and a part of the life of the English people in whatever part of the world they may be. The great names come down the years—Beaucklerk, Mynn, Spofforth, Blackham, Trumper, Ranji, Fry, MacLaren, Jackson, Lockwood, Barnes, Hirst, Rhodes, Faulkner, Cameron, and many another—never forgetting the Doctor "who turned the game of cricket into a many-chorded lyre destined

## A HISTORY OF CRICKET

to make its enchanting music heard the world over"—down to the Hammonds, Bradmans, Comptons, and Edrichs of to-day.

After an experience of some sixty years and more, I hold the view that cricket is more popular and better understood to-day than it has ever been. This I attribute to two causes—the relaxation and temporary freedom from worry which the matches at Lord's, and other grounds, afforded to a large public during the war, and to the interest engendered by the many admirable broadcasts on cricket given by the B.B.C. during the last three seasons. The huge crowds at Lord's in 1945 were the first indications of this increased interest and enthusiasm, and this was emphasized last Summer all over the country. Cricket, like nearly everything else, has its critics, but many people feel that it is one of the few sane things left in a distracted and difficult world. It is surrounded by a tradition of good conduct and good manners, and no institution or country was ever harmed by a good tradition. It has captured the enthusiasm of people the whole world over, and is a great bond and indeed a chain, which in the words of the Eton boating song "nothing in life shall sever." It is the greatest game the wit of man has devised. I envy the boy, or man, who reads this book for the first time. I have read and re-read it, and every time I read it I enjoy it more.

P. F. WARNER.

*December 1947.*

## PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION

WHEN the third edition of this book was sold out within a month or two late last summer and autumn the decision had to be made whether to bring the matter up to date without disturbing the main bulk of the book, or whether to undertake a thorough general revision. The latter course, in present publishing conditions, would have involved incalculable delay. It was felt to be better, particularly in view of the stimulus to cricket interest that is always evoked by the presence of an Australian team in England, to agree to the expedient of the photographic process, although this involves perpetuating a number of textual errors and anachronisms we wish could have been corrected.

The substance of the first edition originally appeared in the columns of *The Cricketer*, and the editor of that paper, Sir Pelham Warner, must therefore bear some measure of responsibility for it. Certainly without his inspiration and unfailing encouragement I should never have completed what was all too lightly begun. The Introduction which he wrote to the second edition, and has now re-written for this, adds further to my debt. In the second edition, published in 1938, the latter half of the book was substantially recast: six new chapters were added to cover the period subsequent to the 1914-18 War, while the sections dealing with the years 1900-14 had to undergo material compression. This not-inconsiderable labour I could not have undertaken by myself, but I was fortunate enough to secure the collaboration of Mr. E. W. Swanton whose broad shoulders readily sustained by far the greater part of the burden.

The third edition brought the story up to 1946: for this edition I was myself responsible, for it was only in time to correct the proofs that Mr. Swanton returned from the Far East where in a Japanese prison-camp he had done so much to prove that cricket and morale go hand in hand. Now for our latest venture he has been able to bring our History right up to date.

For all the sections in which we have collaborated we have been well content to accept jointly the first person singular, wherever it occurs. But though I may be the *fons et origo* of this book such is the prestige and authority now attaching to the name of my partner that I feel our "batting-order" might very properly be inverted. Fortunately, however unequally the burden of these revisions has



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been shared, it has not for a moment impaired the happiness of our work together.

We have of necessity omitted the Bibliography that appeared in the Appendix to the first edition, and to which I must still refer the reader for an acknowledgment of the countless sources to which I am in debt, but it would be churlish indeed if we did not pay tribute to those shelves full of *Wisdens* without which no cricket historian can move a step.

H. S. A.

WINCHESTER

*January 1948*

The authors and publishers draw special attention to the opening paragraph of the Preface to this Fourth Edition.

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## CHAPTER I

### ARCHÆOLOGICAL

THE instinct to throw and to hit is the basis of man's primitive armoury. Nature, of her bounty, has supplied him with an endless variety of missiles, of means of striking, and of marks, and, in her wisdom, has provided that what the man must do for life, the boy should attempt for fun. That is the genesis of cricket.

From time immemorial a ball has exercised an irresistible attraction on man. Five thousand years ago the Egyptian played ninepins; Nausicaa and her maidens were having fielding practice when Odysseus discovered himself to them; the Athenian boys, in the famous relief, are obviously "bullying off" at hockey, and, if an ingenious textual conjecture is correct, Isocrates, the orator, played it too. Only pinkeye stayed Horace and indigestion Virgil from joining Maccenas in a ball game on the famous journey to Brundisium, and hurley was popular in Ireland before St. Patrick came.

But though ball games have ever been pandemic, specialization seems to have set in from a very early date. The Eastern peoples took to hitting the ball with their familiar mallet, or mallet, and it was from the East, and following on the Crusades, that polo reached Europe; from the Roman "fives" (*pila palmaris*) developed all the varieties of racquet games with royal tennis, *jeu de paume*, at their head. But the northern branch of the Nordic family had a way of their own, and preferred to hit with that which it was second nature for them to carry, a staff or club, be it straight or "crooked."

This pastime of "club-ball" was no doubt the generic ancestor of most of our English ball games. From that parent tree sprang, in different branches, the hockey group, in which the ball is driven to and fro; the golf group, in which it is hit towards a mark; and lastly, the cricket group, in which it, or its equivalent, is driven away from the mark when in motion. This last category again subdivides according as the missile is set in motion by the striker



himself, as in tip-cat, and trap-ball, or by the hand of a second player, as in cat and dog, stool-ball, and in cricket.

From the time when John Nyren gave the first real impetus to cricket history there have been attempts, many and various, to derive cricket in its origin from one or other of these games. James Pycroft, of whom a good deal more anon, was content to "identify" cricket with club-ball, the child with the parent, and others in turn have merged its dignity in the humble antecedents of its more or less distant cousins.

For many years now these interpretations had been repeated without serious challenge, beyond Mr. Ashley-Cooper's critical footnotes to his famous edition of *The Cricket Field*. But in the last two years a new expert has, all unheralded, entered the lists, and played havoc with much that has passed, if not for truth, at least for probability. I have no hesitation in saying that the four little brochures which he has produced under the modest anonymity of "H. P.-T." constitute a study of the origins and earliest history of the game far in advance of anything previously attempted, and to his learned researches and ingenious and constructive criticism I owe whatever of value my own opening chapters may possess.

The claims of "cat and dog" seem mainly to rest upon the statement of a certain Dr. Jamieson. In his *Etymological Dictionary of the Scottish Language*, published in 1808, he gives a somewhat detailed description of the game, from which it appears to have been a sort of double-wicket compromise between tip-cat and rounders, and then concludes: "It seems to be an early form of cricket." In support of this much play has been made over the fact that in the Scot game the cat was bowled at a hole cut in the ground; herein some purported to see the archetype of the "popping hole," which according to the mysterious manuscript of William Ward's "old cricketer," once used to be dug, not on the crease at all, but in the middle of the old low wicket. About that wicket I shall have something to say later, but for the moment it seems enough to remark that the first known reference to "cat and dog" is no earlier than 1688, by which date there is plenty of evidence for cricket proper being a fully developed and popular game in Southern England.

The chief sponsor for the pretensions of tip-cat is William Bolland; but not even our natural respect for the founder and perpetual president of I Zingari can commend to us a suggestion that offends our proper pride, and rests, so far as I can see, on no firmer foundation than ingenious, but etymologically untenable, guesswork, to wit, that the base at tip-cat came to be called a wicket, that tip-cat came to be played with a double wicket, from one to the other of which the striker had to cross, and so from this game of "cross-wicket" came, by syncope common in the vernacular our own word "cricket."

In our next round we have to stand up to an even doughtier name, for the claims of "stool-ball" found no less a champion than Andrew Lang. Cricket, he argues, is certainly an old word for a stool, derived apparently from the German *kriechen*, to creep; in Scotland "we talk of a 'creepy-stool'":

It's a wise wife that kens her weird,  
What though ye mount the creepy,

says Allan Ramsay, meaning the stool of repentance. If, then, stool-ball be the origin of cricket, and if a cricket be a stool, 'cricket' may be merely a synonym for stool-ball." But the truth is that stool-ball was not the parent of cricket at all, but a somewhat delicate sister, evolved as a less strenuous variety of their brothers' sport by the country maidens, who used for a mark the familiar and obvious milking-stool: as such it has recently enjoyed a welcome resurrection. As final proof that it could not possibly have been the parent game of cricket, we may point to the definite evidence of an allusion to cricket and stool-ball as distinct and contemporary games, popular in Kent about the middle of the seventeenth century.

Finally, there is the case of "handyn and handoute": and here we have to join issue with Pycroft, who accepted the suggestion of an eighteenth-century lawyer, Barrington, that the game, banned by a statute of Edward IV, on which he was commenting, was a "kind of cricket." Now the sole evidence for his conclusion was, by Barrington's own confession, the similarity of the name with the term "hands," then (i.e. 1740) common as a cricket term for "innings." We may point out, in passing, that this coincidence might be thought to point much more definitely to "racquets," where both terms still survive intact; but there is more conclusive refutation in the fact that the statute explicitly prohibits the practice of the game in a man's "house or yard." That cricket was ever cradled within doors passes belief!

Having cleared the field, then, of these intruders, what can we put in their place? Nothing, I fear, except that generic club-ball, of which we began by speaking, nor can we possibly point to a date when cricket ceased to be club-ball and became itself; like most of the important factors in our national history, the process was gradual: cricket was not born, it "just grewed." All we can do is to array some evidence that bears upon that silent evolution.

On a genealogical roll of the Kings of England, compiled in the reign of King Henry III, and again on a manuscript dated 1344 (No. 264 in the Bodleian Library), there are illuminated various figures obviously engaged in playing "club and ball." In one case the striker is using a "battledore" and defending a mark resembling, but smaller than, that regular in stool-ball to-day; in others he is

using a longer and straighter weapon ; in both the striking is done one-handed. But still more suggestive evidence has been recently unearthed, and is now actually available for purchase as a post-card (No. 11 of Set 58) at the British Museum. It represents part of the illumination to a decretal of Pope Gregory IX, sent to England for that embellishment somewhere about the beginning of the fourteenth century. On it we see two figures, the one a boy with a straight bat and a ball, the other his tutor, obviously demonstrating a stroke with a lengthy, but otherwise exact, counterpart to a "stump," pointed at the end after the most approved modern pattern.

Now it is, to say the least of it, a curious coincidence that this "club-ball cameo" coincides, more or less precisely, with the literary reference which, as it is the most debated, is certainly, if accepted, the earliest of all known to cricket specifically so-called. In 1787 the London Society of Antiquaries unearthed from their library and printed some wardrobe accounts of the royal household in the reign of Edward I, and "in so doing set the cricket world a riddle which still awaits its *Cedipus*." In the entries for the twenty-eighth year of the said King's reign there occurs the following item :

Domino Johanni de Leek, capellano Domini Edwardi fil' Regis, pro den' per ipsum liberat' eidem Domino suo ad ludendum ad *creag*, et alios ludos per vices, per manus proprias apud Westm' 10 die Marcii 100s.

Et per manus Hugonis camerani sui apud Newenton mense Marcii 20s. Summa . . . 6 . 0 . 0.

Translated, it runs as follows :—

To Master John de Leek, chaplain of Prince Edward, the King's son, for monies which he has paid out, personally and by the hands of others, for the said Prince's playing at Cr—and other sports—at Westminster March 10—100s.

And by the hands of Hugo, his Chamberlain, at Newenton in the month of March—20s. Total . . . £6 . 0 . 0.

Now, what was this "*creag*" at which the Black Prince's grandfather was playing, when a boy of sixteen, and probably in the company of the notorious Piers Gaveston, whose evil influence was to contribute so much to his tragic end ? The learning of philologists has debated it in vain, but from their contentions certain conclusions can now safely be drawn. There is no known Latin word corresponding to "*creag*," and capable of any satisfactory interpretation in a sporting sense. But if we regard it as an attempt to "low-Latinize" a native word, we may find ourselves on a hotter scent. Before making the attempt, however, we must make a slight digression.

When, in 1893, the fifth volume of Dr. Murray's *New English Dictionary* appeared, it raised a hornet's nest for cricket archæologists. In a fifteenth-century French manuscript there had been found

the statement, "On jouit à la balle, près d'une atache ou criquet." Commenting on this, M. Jusserand had interpreted the "criquet" as "un baton planté en terre, qui servait de but dans une des formes du jeu." Arguing then, it would seem, from the fact that no reference so early as this was to be found in English literature to our own "cricket," and that in our game one certainly did "bowl at a mark," the dictionary authorities committed themselves to the conclusion that the English word was derived from the French. Now we may point out at the start that an *argumentum e silentio* is never very conclusive: but more potent is the fact that in most of the full-blooded varieties of club-ball, e.g. hockey, bandy, golf—even in the Frenchmen's own "la crosse"—the game takes its name from the weapon and not from the mark. And even if this "criquet" was in historic fact our own national game, is it not possible that in the close intercourse of more than three centuries the Frenchmen borrowed the athletic infant, name and all, from the men who fought and lived amongst them? For an army does not always fight, and in days of rest and relaxation how better and how more naturally could our yeomen have shown their cousins "the mettle of their pasture"?

And now to see how "cricket" did originate. In the mother tongue of the northern branch of the Aryan race there was a syllable beginning with *cr*, ending with a hard *c*, having for its middle letter every variety of the vowels according to tribal predilection, and meaning a staff or stick. Witness the earliest English version of the Twenty-third Psalm, "Thy rod and Thy staff comfort me," which reads, "Gird thin and *crice* thin me frefredon." Furthermore, the termination "et," though it sounds French, need not be anything of the sort: it may really be of good old English stock, a variant form of the diminutive terminal "el." Hence, "cricket" is simply a small "crick" or staff, cricket-bat a redundancy exactly paralleled by golf-club, hockey-stick, or billiard-cue; and Dr. Johnson was right when he derived cricket from "*cryce*, Saxon, a stick," though less happy when he defined it as a sport "in which the contenders drive a ball with sticks in opposition to each other"!

Reverting then, for a moment, to Prince Edward, let us now see what can be made of the puzzle. With the hard terminal "c" of *cric* a "g" was virtually interchangeable; now suppose Piers, or some other French playfellow of Edward's, attempted to pronounce the word, he would sound the "i" as "ee," or "ea," and straightway we have "creaget," which the clerk of accounts, following his consistent practice, shortened down to "creag."

However questionable may be the existence of cricket in the time of the Plantagenets, there is no doubt as to its being played under the Tudors. In the fortieth year of Elizabeth, 1598, a certain

John Denwick, gentleman and Queen's Coroner for the county, bears written testimony (still preserved, I believe, at Guildford) as to a parcel of land in the parish of Holy Trinity in that town, which, originally waste, had been appropriated and enclosed by one John Parvish to serve as a timber yard. This land, says Denwick, he had known for fifty years past, and, when a scholar of the Free School of Guildford (founded 1509), "he and several of his fellows did run and play there at crickets and other plaies." Now at the time of writing John Denwick was fifty-nine years old, so that we may safely date that definite testimony as not later than 1550.

In 1598, one Giovanni Florio, in the English version of his Italian dictionary, defined *sprittare* as "to make a noise like a cricket; to play cricket-a-wicket and be merry." A few years later Randle Cotgrave's *French and English Dictionary* translated "Crosse" as *inter alia* "the crooked staff wherewith boys play at cricket"; and in 1644 Francis Gouldman spoke to the same effect.

The next piece of evidence is of more general interest. Amongst the propaganda with which the Royalists made play early in the seventeenth century is an attack upon Oliver Cromwell by one, Sir William Dugdale, who asserts that when a boy, i.e. 1612-1620, the Protector threw himself into "a dissolute and dangerous course," became "famous for football, cricket, cudgelling and wrestling," and earned for himself "the name of royster." This was in London, and even if a libel on Oliver, it testifies to cricket being already a common, if disreputable, sport.

So far our information points to the game being more or less confined to boys, hence it is not surprising that Shakespeare, for all that he often sought his images and similes from the sports and pastimes of the people and found them in references to tennis, bowls, and football, yet nowhere refers to cricket.

But soon after this date we find our first definite evidence for cricket being played, and played enthusiastically, by men in one part at least of the King's dominions. King James may have been a stickler for the powers of the Church, but he was a latitudinarian in morals. In 1617, divers bishops, wishing, no doubt, to ingratiate themselves with an incipiently recalcitrant flock, applied to the King for greater liberty of diversion for the people on the Lord's Day. The result was the publication of the *Book of Sports*, i.e. sports permissible on that day, and a definite injunction on various parish priests to read the same from their pulpits under pain of the King's displeasure and imprisonment by the High Commission Court.

Now in that book cricket finds no mention, and we can therefore regard with equanimity its ultimate fate when, in the presence of the Sheriffs of London and Middlesex, it was publicly burnt at Cheapside in 1643 at the hands of the Common Hangman! But

it does provide a link with the game in the person of a certain Puritan divine, Thomas Wilson, Rector of Otham, near Maidstone. This gentleman was recusant in the matter, and was promptly suspended by Archbishop Laud, but, continuing his preaching in the public streets, he went far, before his death in 1653, to accomplish the conversion of Maidstone. Maidstone, as his biographer tells us, "was formerly (i.e. *circa* 1630-1640) a very profane town, insomuch that I have seen morrice dancing, cudgel playing, stool-ball, crickets, and many other sports openly and publickly on the Lord's Day."

Fifteen years or so later, in 1654, the Churchwardens and Overseers of Eltham—Kent again—fined seven of their parishioners the then considerable sum of 2s. each for playing cricket on the Lord's Day. It is good to know that the resting-place of W. G. can boast so high a cricket antiquity! Again, during the Commonwealth, Edward Phillips, a nephew of Milton's, makes one of the ladies in his *Mysteries of Love and Eloquence* torture herself with the doubt whether one day her beloved may not say, "Would my eyes had been beat out of my head with a cricket-ball the day before I saw thee!"

By 1676 the missionary process had begun in earnest, for in that year we find a naval chaplain, Henry Teonge, recording how he and a party from three of His Majesty's ships in the Levant rode up from Antioch to Aleppo, and there, on May 6th, "did in a fine valley pitch a princely tent and divert themselves with various sports, including 'krickett.'" Eight years earlier, at home, the proprietor of "The Ram" in Smithfield was rated for a cricket field, and before the end of the century we find the Jeremiah who wrote *The World Bewitch'd*, complaining that cricket, among other sports, "will be very much in fashion and more tradesmen may be seen playing in the fields than working in their shops." Chamberlayne's *State of England* mentions cricket among the people's recreations for the first time in its 1707 edition, and by 1720 the Rev. John Strype, editing Stow's *Survey of London*, has been forced to add cricket to the list of amusements popular with the citizens of the metropolis.

The truth seems to be that the last half of the seventeenth century was really the critical stage in the game's evolution, the era in which it developed from the pastime of boys, or, at best, of the yeomen of the exclusive Weald into one of the favourite recreations of the fashionable world; and it is not the least convincing of "H. P. T.'s" many ingenious conjectures that to this end political history greatly contributed. With the temporary eclipse of the Royalist cause in 1648, it is probable that many of the "nobility and gentry" retired from London to their country seats. Here some of them, such as the Sackvilles of Knole Park, would be in close touch with the Wealden game, the younger men, from sheer ennui, would try their

hands at it and find that it was good. With the Restoration, back they came to London with their new discovery, bringing with them, perhaps, in their service some of the local experts. In a year or two it became the thing in London society to make matches and to form clubs—a club at St. Albans is said to date from 1666—and thus was inaugurated that régime of feudal patronage which was to control the destinies of the game for the next century and more.

The interest of the great was immediately reflected in the columns of the Press, and it is now we get the first newspaper advertisements and records of cricket matches. In March 1700—the season started earlier then—*The Post Boy* announces a “match at cricket,” the best of five games, it would appear, the first to be played “on Clapham Common near Foxhall on Easter Monday next, for £10 a head each game and £20 the odd one.” Seven years later London enters the lists playing an eleven of Croydon in Lamb’s Conduit Fields, near Holborn, and in 1719 we read of what may be regarded as the first recorded county match, between “the Londoners and the Kentish men.”

But before we attempt an account of the era of patronage, and the infancy of the county championship, let us try to visualize the development of the game itself.

## CHAPTER II

### "CRICKET ARRIVES"

THE earliest code of laws which has come down to us is dated 1744, and represents the game as played at headquarters, i.e. the Artillery Ground, London, at that date.

In his booklet *Old Time Cricket*, H. P.-T. has subjected these laws to minute examination, and from a study of their text has been led to the conclusion that they really constitute a sophisticated and relatively literary revision of a much earlier code, the innovations consisting to a great extent of provisions against various species of possible sharp practice.

Now his ingenious deduction is further supported by another document of even greater antiquity. In the first chapter of *The Cricket Field* Pycroft refers to a poem called "In Certamen Pilae," by a certain William Goldwin, an Etonian, who had gone up to King's, Cambridge, in 1700, just at the time when cricket had finally emerged from its rustic egg-shell. The poem itself is one of a collection, all in Latin, entitled *Musae Juveniles*, and published in London in 1706. For more than two hundred years it seems to have foundered in the literary lumber-room, until in 1922 the editor of *Etoniana* resurrected it with an English translation by Mr. Harold Perry, which, by the courtesy of these two gentlemen, I am now enabled to print.

#### IN CERTAMEN PILAE.

Vere novo, cum temperies liquidissima  
coeli  
Arridet, suadetque virentis gratia  
terrae  
Veloces agitare pedes super aequora  
Campi;  
Lecta cohors juvenum, baculis armata  
repandis  
Quos habiles ludo Manus ingeniosa  
polivit,  
In Campum descendit ovans; sua  
gloria cuique.  
Hic Magis aptus humum celeri trans-  
mittere planta,  
Et vigilante oculo variis discursibus  
omnes

#### THE CRICKET MATCH.

'Tis early Spring, the lucid air  
and smiling Skies make all things fair:  
green Nature bids our feet, with speed,  
disport them on the level mead.  
I see a chosen company,  
with curving bats armed gallantly,  
(smoothed by deft hands for use)—  
and lo!  
with shouts into the field they go.  
each boasts his own peculiar grace,  
*this* skims the ground, supreme in pace,  
hawk-eyed the moment's need to spy  
and to and fro unerring fly.



Ire redire vias ; longe torquere per  
 auras  
 Doctior ille pilam, atque adversos  
 rumpere ventos ;  
 Tertius arte valet quo non praestantior  
 alter  
 Per sola plana *Orbem* dextrae libramine  
 justo  
 Fundere, qui rapido cursu praeverteret  
 ictum.

Adventum excipiunt *Manus Adver-*  
*saria* laetis  
 Alloquiis nectuntque moras,—mox  
 jurgia miscent  
 Civilesque iras, quod vult imponere  
 ludo  
 Quisque suas leges. *Nestor*, cui cana  
 senectus  
 Conciliat cultum turbae veniamque  
 loquendi,  
 Se densae immiscens plebi vice fungitur  
 aequi  
 Judicis, et quanquam positis campes-  
 tribus armis  
 Jamdudum indulsit senio, non inme-  
 mor artis  
 Proponit justas leges, et temperat  
 iras.

Deinde locum signant, qua se diffun-  
 dit in aequor  
 Plana superficies ; Hinc illinc partibus  
 aoque  
 Oppositis bifido Surgentes vertice  
 furcae  
 Erectas modicum quas distinet inter-  
 vallum  
 Infiguntur humo ; Tum virgula ponitur  
 alba,  
 Virgula, qua dubii certaminis alea  
 pendet,  
 Et bene defendi poscit : *Coriaceus*  
*Orbis*  
 Vi ruit infesta, quem si fortuna Maligna  
 Dirigit in rectum, subversaue Machina  
 fulcris  
 Abripitur, cedas positus inglorius armis.  
 Stant Moderatores bini stationibus  
 aptis  
 Fustibus innixi, quos certo attingere  
 pulsu  
 Lex jubet, aut operam cursus perdemus  
 inanem.

Parte alia, visus qua libera copia  
 detur,  
 Parvo in colle sedent duo pectora fida,  
 parata  
 Cultellis numerum crescentem incidere  
 ligno.

that best can hurl the ball afar  
 and bursts the wind's opposing bar ;  
 that other fears no rival's skill,  
 when, o'er the even turf, his will  
 sends forth a poised sphere, too fleet  
 to reck the batsman's answering beat.

the friendly foe's loud-voiced array  
 greets their approach, then comes  
 delay,  
 then quarrels rife, while all exclaim  
 and all would lord it o'er the game.  
 now some grey veteran intercedes,  
 and wins their love, the while he  
 pleads :  
 a Daniel come to judgment, he  
 to all around speaks equity.  
 though now his arms be laid aside,  
 and marred by years his early pride,  
 yet rich is he in cricket lore,  
 and proves that they need strive no  
 more.

the Lists are set where, (happy  
 chance !)  
 the meadow yields a smooth expanse ;  
 opposed, on either hand, appear  
 twin rods that forked heads uprear,  
 with ends set firmly in the green,  
 (nor wide the middle space between),  
 and next a milk-white Bail is laid  
 from fork to fork, whereby is swayed  
 the dubious issue of the fight,  
 and all must guard it with their might.  
 the Leathern Orb speeds forth like  
 fate,  
 and should its destined line be straight  
 and raze the bail's support, defeat  
 ensues and sorrowful retreat.  
 each at his wicket, near at hand,  
 propped on his staff, the Umpires  
 stand,  
 the runner's bat must touch their pale,  
 or else the run will nought avail.

on a low mound, whence clear the  
 view,  
 repose a trusty pair and true :  
 their simple task, with ready blade,  
 notches to cut, as runs are made.

Tum Cortatores digitis capita aequa  
recensent  
Ordine dispositi: Medias it nummus  
in auras  
Arbiter et primas partes decernit  
agendas  
Aut his, aut aliis. Nondum discrimine  
coepit  
Stant in procinctu juvenes; dum  
cautior ille,  
Mittere cui data cura pilam, rursusque  
remissam  
Effugio prohibere, Manu alterutraque  
tenaci  
Excipere attackam, praescripta ad  
Munia jussit.  
En! Quali studio sese disponit!  
Ut acres  
Excubias agitat circum diffusa juven-  
tus  
Expectans ludi Monitum, trepidan-  
tiaque haurit  
Corda pavor pulsans, famaеque arrecta  
cupido.

Et jam dulce paratur opus: Par  
nobile primum  
Herūm certamen init, duo fulmina  
ludi;  
Inde, dato signo, pila lubrica viribus  
acta  
Carcere prona fugit, volitansque per  
aequora summa  
Radit iter rapidum: sese *Hostis*  
poplite flexo  
Inclinat, cita currentis vestigia lustrans  
Si modo subsultet, tum certum assurgit  
in ictum  
Bracha vi torquens celeri, longeque  
propellit  
Clangentem sphaeram. Superas volat  
illa per auras  
Continuo stridore ruens, atque aethera  
findit.

At coelo observans Catus *Explorator*  
in alto  
Insidias parat, erectis palmisque  
cadentem  
Excipit exultans, dextraque retorquet  
ovanti.  
Hinc laetus sequitur clamor, dolor  
obruit illos  
Moerentes tacite casum infelicis Amici;  
Grande malum! Ast uno avulso non  
deficit alter.  
Aemulus hic laudum furiisque ultrici-  
bus actus  
Ingreditur scenam, et damnum repar-  
are minatur:  
Successum Dea dira negat: vix torque  
quaterque

the Players now ranged out at length,  
two sides are picked, of equal strength.  
a Coin goes up, now, Fortune, say,  
who first shall bat, or we, or they!  
ere yet the brave encounter start,  
each youth stands ready for his part,  
yet graver cares must him befall,  
whose office is to bowl the ball,  
then stop its sharp return and hold  
it fast, by either hand controlled.  
while others to their work he sends,  
how busy he to gain his ends!  
around him spreads the brisk array,  
and waits the word that heralds  
"Play."

the Issue's joined, two chiefs of name  
go forth, both heroes of the game.  
the word is given, and, urged with  
might,  
speeds the greased ball in level flight,  
and o'er the grassy surface sweeps;  
with bended knee the batsman keeps  
a forward stance, to watch its way  
and mark its rise, then *sans* delay,  
his arms descend with lightning fall,  
to smite amain the ringing ball;  
and, ringing on, sublime it flies  
and disappears into the Skies.

meanwhile some wary Scout afield  
brings craft to make the victor yield,  
views the descent with upward eyes,  
till his stretched hands secure the  
prize;  
then gaily throws it up once more,  
cheered by his friends' exultant roar.  
but silent bows the foeman's head,  
in anguish for a comrade sped.  
woe worth the day! yet, eager still,  
another comes the breach to fill.  
fired with high hopes, his noble heat  
essays to overwhelm defeat.  
yet Fortune frowns, the bowler's force  
four times accomplishes the course.

Cursum *Orbis* peragit, vix dum tria  
 sensit ab hoste  
 Verbera, praecipiti cum protenus  
 impete missa  
 Virgam sede levem rapit, eluditque  
 Minantem  
 Ille indignanti vultu sua tela reponit  
 Atque Deos atque astra vocans crude-  
 lia, donec  
 Succurrens partes implêrit proximus  
 haeres,  
 Qui jam languentem causae socialis  
 honorem  
 Instaurare velit; sed et hic quoque  
 numine laevo  
 Orditur lusum; nam dum cursusque  
 recursusque  
 Alternos iterat, Vestigia lubrica ponens  
 Labitur infelix, pronus metamque sub  
 ipsam  
 Procumbit; tremefacta gemit sub  
 pondere tellus  
 Ingenti, risuque exultat rustica turba.  
 Quemque manent sua fata, trahit suus  
 exitus omnes.  
 Ah! Nimum properans; Seu fors,  
 sive artis egestas  
 Nisibus invidit; retro sublapsa refertur  
 Spes omnis juvenum vultuque et  
 corde relanguet.

Adversum auspiciis melioribus  
 agmen arenam  
 Intrans, perpetuisque fatigant ictibus  
 Orbem;  
 Fervet opus; manat toto de corpore  
 sudor;  
 Mox ubi ludendi processerit ordo tenore  
 Felici, litemque unus discriminat ictus,  
 Impete pulsa pila in coeli sublimia  
 templa  
 Provehitur rapiente Noto, lusumque  
 coronat;  
 Concertata diu Victoria concrepat alis,  
 Et complet clamore polum fremituque  
 secundo.

and thrice the batsman plays his part.  
 then, headlong flung with desperate art,  
 the ball prevents the bat, and shears  
 the light bail rudely from its piers.  
 the Victim, reddening with dismay,  
 shoulders his bat and walks away,  
 mourning his luck and low estate,  
 until the coming of his mate.  
 he, to a sinking banner true,  
 renews a fray he soon shall rue.  
 anon, between the wickets pent,  
 on runs this way and that intent,  
 he slips, he falls, unhappy soul!  
 upon the threshold of his goal,  
 flat on the earth, with sounding  
 thwack,  
 while jeers aloud the rustic pack.  
 to each his innings: and its end,  
 that comes too soon our case to mend;  
 for, be it *Fate*, or lack of Skill,  
 our efforts are but failures still;  
 back flows the current of success,  
 as downcast looks and moods confess.

'neath happier stars, the aspiring foe  
 distress the ball with blow on blow:  
 hot is the pace, each brow bedewed,  
 with linked triumphs oft renewed  
 waxes the strife, but one notch more,  
 and mastery will crown the score.  
 'tis done! the stricken sphere ascends  
 heavenward, on airs the South Wind  
 lends:  
 and, ended now the long debate,  
 Dame Victory claps her wings, elate,  
 and makes the Sky with cheers  
 articulate.

H. A. P.

Now one of the interesting points about this poem is this, that, except in one instance which we shall notice later, the game described seems to have been played precisely according to the rules of 1744, so that they themselves may possibly be ante-dated nearly half a century, and the basic laws which they embodied may well go back, at least as a compound of locally variant oral traditions, to a time when our language boasted but two genders, and the long-suffering ball was naturally a "she"!

In the light, then, of these two historic documents, and of such other evidence as we can find, let us now examine some of the constituent elements of our game.

First the wicket: in the very earliest days of the game the Wealden boy, living in a world of trees, would find a natural mark for attack and defence in every tree-stump, just as Hobbs tells us that the first wicket he himself defended was a lamp-post in a Cambridge street. But anon as he began to move about the countryside he would find that his cousins of the downlands had followed a different plan. The normal entry into their hurdle sheep-pens took the form of a smaller hurdle, consisting of two uprights and a movable crossbar. Now this crossbar, the modern “slip-rail” of stock-keepers, was called the “bail,” and the whole contrivance was simply that little gate, or “wicket,” of which Bunyan spoke anent the soul of man. Its superiority to the tree-stump as a mark in cricket consisted simply in the fact that the dislodging of the bail left no room for argument as to whether the stump or stumps had been hit or not. So the inner Weald adopted it, but with instinctive conservatism retained an echo of their first love by calling the hurdle uprights “stumps,” and “stumps” they have remained until this day.

From lines 25 and 26 of the Latin poem it seems clear that the wicket that did duty in Goldwin’s game was definitely of the “higher than wide” variety, in fact the regulation affair of the 1744 Laws. But here we are reminded of Mr. Ward’s “small manuscript,” which recorded the recollections of an old cricketer concerning the game as he knew it about this very date, the beginning of the eighteenth century, and attributed to the period a wicket 1 foot high and 2 feet wide, with a hole in the middle, into which the ball had to be “popped” for the batsman to be run out. Nyren, to whom the manuscript was lent, accepted the hole, but mistrusted the dimensions, though, to my thinking, they stand or fall together. Now there is a picture at Lord’s, No. 17 of the M.C.C. collection, which distinctly shows wicket-keeper and batsman scrambling for the “popping-hole,” and other artists of the first half of the century have depicted a wicket at least no higher than it was wide. The evidence of art is not conclusive—indeed, in some cases it is demonstrably unreliable—but in light of it we cannot dismiss the manuscript statement altogether. Possibly it was a variety of practice local to the Western Weald, but it was not “regulation cricket” as understood in its more eastern home, as accepted by London about 1700, as prescribed by the Laws of 1744, and as obviously represented in the contemporary picture appearing opposite page 32.

Now this “regulation wicket” was 22 inches high by 6 inches broad, the popping crease was 46 inches before it, and the pitch 22 yards in length, and for all these dimensions H. P.-T. has most convincingly accounted. In Tudor times there were in England two indispensable units of length measure: the first and longest was “the gad,” a land-measure equivalent to  $16\frac{1}{2}$  of our modern feet,

the second a measure of 45 inches, or of the "arrows a cloth-yard long," of which Michael Drayton sang. This was subdivided into sixteenths, known as "nails." Apply these units to cricket, and we find the pitch equal to exactly 4 gads, or, to go farther back still, the width of a Saxon acre-strip, and the wicket, save for a negligible fraction, to 8 nails by 2 nails. Again, the crease was originally a (s)cratch, but as the game became more sophisticated, these "scratches" were systematically cut, an inch deep and an inch wide, exactly as they continued to be down to the time of W. G. Now take away from the 46 inches of the Laws the two  $\frac{1}{2}$  inches from the centre to the edge of each crease, and the 45 inches that remain are exactly the cloth-yard or ell. These dimensions of the wicket held good until somewhere about 1777, when, for reasons which we shall see anon, a middle stump was added: twenty-two years later the wicket was heightened by 2 inches and broadened by 1, and a final alteration about 1820 brought it to its present stature.

The primitive bat was probably just a shaped branch of a tree: the sons of shepherds may perhaps have played with one of their father's broken crooks or "criccs." The word itself means simply a club or stave: Wickliffe arms the great company at the betrayal with "swerdis and battis." A band of smugglers in Kent who always went about so provided were called "batsmen," and the word is still so used in the Weald to-day. At the time under review bats were probably of great variety in shape and length and weight, but tended on the whole to resemble the modern hockey-stick on a massive scale. To judge from old prints, they were certainly longer than those of to-day: as certainly they were heavier—and continued to be so for a century or more; and the bulk of the weight was concentrated in the curved end in order to deal with the type of bowling then universal, fast "sneaks." This type in general they maintained until the advent of "three-quarter" or length bowling rendered the curved-ended, narrow-shanked bat hopelessly inadequate, and the modern straight, and eventually "shouldered," blade began to replace it. This fundamental revolution in the game has always been ascribed to the great players of the Hambledon Club; but there is at least some evidence to suggest that the process had begun almost a generation before John Small and David Harris. Small has generally been cited as the first bat-maker of fame, but as early as 1773 Pett of Sevenoaks was also well known in the same line of business, and sold the best bats for 4s. 6d. ! Nothing was laid down as to the width of the bat until the 1774 edition of the Laws, when a certain "Shock" White of Reigate, appearing with a bat broader than the wicket itself, forced the legislators' hands, and a limit of  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches was imposed. Shortly afterwards the Hambledon Club produced an iron gauge to test the Laws'

observance. I wonder whether to-day Mr. Lacey could produce one at Lord's!

The ball probably differed little, if at all, from that which we use to-day. Leather casings for balls were made by the Romans, and the tennis-balls of the early sixteenth century were kid-covered and hemp- or hair-stuffed. Farrington, in his diary of 1811, says that the Dukes of Penshurst had then been in the cricket-ball trade for 250 years, so that Goldwin's *Coriaceus orbis* was very likely of their regulation pattern, even if not the six-seamed variety, which they first produced in 1780, and presented to the Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV.

This ball the bowler delivered fast and along the ground (*per aequora summa radit iter rapidum*): in fact, he “bowled” it, and though a greater contrast can hardly be imagined than that between the studied delivery of an ancient “skip” and the whirlwind onslaught of J. M. Gregory, “bowling” it remains unto this day. Four balls he bowled, and then they changed “over”: an echo, perhaps, of the earlier day when a side consisted of four men, with a fifth added later to captain them, and when, conceivably, each delivered one ball in turn.

Originally there was probably only one umpire: the word itself means “an odd man” (non-pair), called in to settle a difference, and the text of the 1744 Laws certainly suggests that the “oral tradition” only provided for one. But the exigencies of double-wicket demanded a second, and Goldwin speaks naturally of *Bini Moderatores*. Alike in Boitard's and in almost all the other early prints the umpires appear, to judge from their clothes, as figures of some distinction, gentlemen, perhaps, “interested” in the match, and chosen one by each side, the universal practice for most of cricket history. Two points about them call for special notice: the “square-leg” umpire is almost universally depicted, not where we should expect to find him, but in a position of imminent personal peril, at a very “silly leg-slip,” and both are always shown *fastibus innixi* leaning on their bats. Now in my own preparatory school-days we invariably took a bat along with us “to umpire with,” not, I believe, from motives of self-preservation, but simply from some unquestioned tradition. For the original practice, at any rate, there is a just conceivable explanation, though unsupported by any other evidence whatsoever, in the curious words of lines 34-35 in Goldwin's poem. “Quos certo attingere pulsu lex jubet” certainly seems to imply that the batsman had to touch the umpire to complete a run. Forty years later the “popping crease” has supplied the goal; but if in 1700 an earlier practice prevailed, we can understand why the “square-leg” umpire stood so near the wicket, and how the bat would supply a more comfortable touching-

place than the gentleman's shins. Tradition would, of course, account for both habits persisting after their *raison d'être* had disappeared.

The most arduous of the umpire's duties did not trouble Goldwin's "moderators," nor their successors for many a year to come. With the old type of bat the batsmen would have had to stand so far from the wicket that no question of "obstruction" could arise. But with the evolution of straight-bat play the trouble started, and eventually one of the best hitters "was so shabby as to put his leg in the way and take advantage of the bowlers," with the result that in the 1774 revision of the Laws the first l.b.w. rule appears, though the offence is not specifically recorded in the score-sheets until twenty years later.

The scorers—there were generally two, no doubt to watch each other!—sat together on the ground, well inside the field of play, and "notched" the runs on their notching sticks, cutting a deeper groove for every tenth run. Until the "scientific revolution" run-getting ruled so low that the method served, but it made no provision for individual scores, and it is not until the Press began to find good copy in cricket that we get a detailed score-sheet, the first being that of the famous match Kent v. All England in 1744, of which more anon. Even this account is economical of words as to the modes of dismissal. Gradually, as the nineteenth century approaches, more particulars are given, but it is not until that century is some way advanced that the bowler's name is recorded, when a man is caught or stumped.

For nearly a hundred years after cricket's "discovery" a spin of a coin determined not only the right to bat first, but also the right to select the pitch. But by 1774 this was changed, and both privileges were bestowed on "the party going from home." The picking of the pitch "within 30 yards of a centre determined by the adversaries" was generally deputed to the best bowler, and occasioned much searching of heart, for which familiar evidence is available in Nyren's sketches of the two great bowlers, "Lumpy" Stevens and David Harris. "Lumpy," a great length bowler, had a passion for shooters, and always sought to choose his ground, so that he might pitch on a downward slope. For "Honest Lumpy did allow, he ne'er could pitch but o'er a brow." David was less self-centred than "Lumpy," and Nyren has recorded the pleasure with which he has watched him choosing a pitch as suitable to his "fellow-worker" as to himself. The wickets were generally pitched at 10 a.m., though the enthusiastic Wykehamists of 1774 began one of their games on "Hills" three hours earlier!

No doubt in the simple Wealden days the rustic cricketer simply threw off his hat and smock and entered the field in what was left of his workaday attire. But as the game became *de règle* uniform

crept in. The Earl of Winchilsea's men had silver lacing round their hats, presumably as a club badge, whilst Hambledon, in the days of their greatness, went one better with gold, and sported a livery of sky-blue coats, black velvet collars, and buttons engraved with the letters “C.C.” In the field, of course, these “blazers” were doffed, and the players appeared “in decent white most gracefully arrayed,” originally, perhaps, only as regards their “snow-white vests,” but gradually in early pictures the dark breeches also turn to white. Even as late as 1833 we find the Rev. John Mitford denouncing the new fashion of trousers, as not only unbecoming, but inconvenient, for “they may be in the way of the ball” ! Above, the players appear at first either bare-headed or in the “tricorn” hats which were then the mode, but by the time of Boitard's print we see them all in serviceable caps after the hunting model. Below, stockings are universal, silk, of course, for the gentlemen, through which you might see the bump heave and, on occasion, the blood flow. Shoes, too, were an unbroken rule, for no one thought of wearing boots for so nimble an exercise, probably with buckles, for did not John Wells once tear a finger-nail off on one when picking up the ball ? But when we read of—

Cricket, nimble boy and light,  
In slippers red and drawers white,

we are inclined to put down the “red” to poetic licence !

Now for the grounds which these cricketers adorned. For all its “boyhood”—and to some extent, indeed, until well on in its life—the game found a natural home on the springy turf of the North and South Downs, the pleasant meadows of the inner Weald, and, from the beginning of the eighteenth century, on the Common Lands as yet exempt from that bricks-and-mortar octopus, London. Chelsea, Kennington, Walworth, and Clapham Commons all echoed to the sound of bat and ball, as well as Parson's and Mitcham Greens, and Dartford Heath, while rather further afield there were famous grounds at Laleham Burway and Moulsey Hurst. But the coming of patronage tended to concentrate the great matches nearer to the *milieu* of the great patrons, and we find much mention of Sir Horace Mann's ground, Bishopsbourne Paddock, near Canterbury, where 20,000 people are said to have mustered to see Kent play Hampshire in 1772, and of “The Vine” at Sevenoaks, the property of the Sackvilles.

But these gentlemen would often be in London, and would naturally prefer to have their amusements of the day nearer to the scene of their “routs” and levées of the night. One of Francis Hayman's paintings shows the gentlemen of “The Royal Academy Club” playing in Marylebone Fields in the two-stump epoch ; the White Conduit Fields, hard by the modern King's Cross Station, and



Lamb's Conduit Fields, near the Foundling Hospital, were other well-known rendezvous ; but much the most famous of all, and indeed the precursor of our present "headquarters," was "The Artillery Ground," Finsbury.

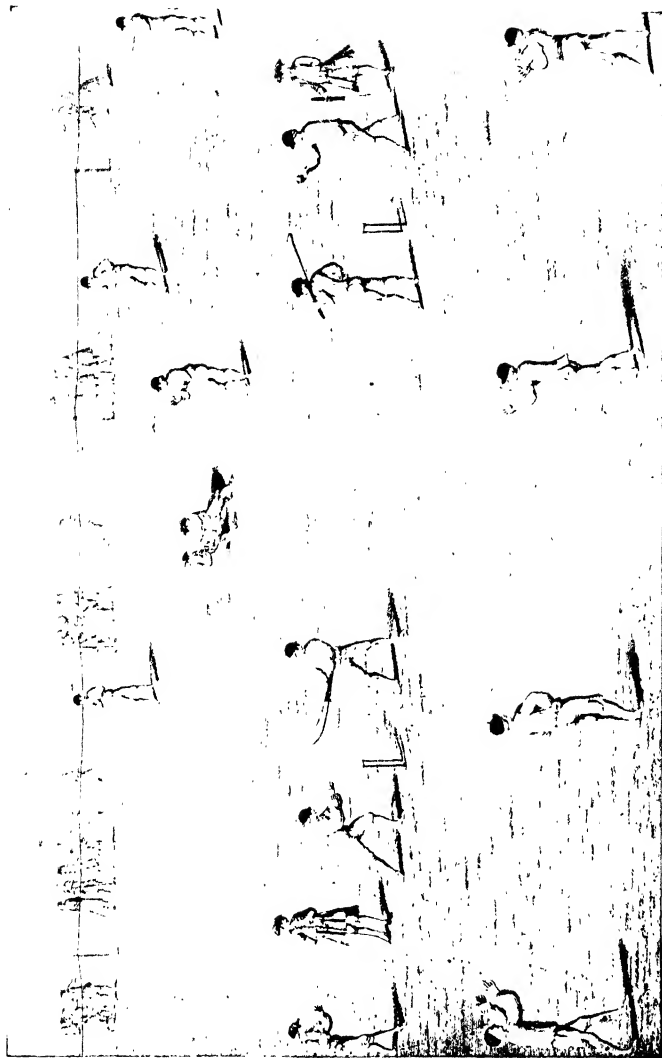
The H.A.C.<sup>1</sup> were originally organized as a bodyguard of Archers for Queen Elizabeth, and were re-established as a Royal Company by Charles II. The earliest match there which I can find recorded took place in 1731, but even then it was "the old" ground ; and it is quite possible that the game was played there nearly fifty years before, when the Company had occasion to warn the public from using the ground for their own sports. By the middle of the century the ground was "kept" by a certain George Smith, mine host of "The Pyed Horse," Chiswell Street, who "took the gate," averaging twopence ahead, but tentatively raised for the very biggest games, and no doubt did good business over the "capital ordinary."

The ring was roped, no dogs were allowed, and if the London mob showed signs of growing restless, Mr. Smith was a match for them.

Wide o'er the extended Plain, the circling string  
Restrains th' impatient Throng, and marks a Ring.  
But if encroaching on forbidden ground,  
The heedless crowd o'erleaps the proper Bound,  
Smith plies, with strenuous arm, the smacking Whip,  
Back to the Line th' affrighted Rebels skip.

So sang "James Love" of the great match, Kent v. All England, 1744. But of it, and its champions, and the first county championship, we must speak in another chapter.

<sup>1</sup> The ground was presented to the H.A.C. in 1638.—F. S. A.-C.: *Rise of Cricket*, p. 49.



AN EXACT REPRESENTATION OF THE GAME OF CRICKET (temp. 1740)  
(From an oil painting by Louis Pierre Boillard in the possession of the M.C.C.)



## CHAPTER III

### KENT, THE FIRST CHAMPIONS

IT is not very hazardous guessing to say that the earliest matches at cricket proper were between neighbouring villages in Kent and Sussex. Then these teams may have pooled their resources to join issue with a similar combine over the border, and from this it is no great step to genuine county cricket. Certain it is that soon after the game became centralized on London, matches between county and county came thick and fast, and once the barriers of the Wealden enclave were broken, and "London society" converted, the inoculation of most of England automatically followed. Gloucestershire was playing the game in 1729. Berks, Bucks, and Herts had succumbed by 1740, Leicestershire a few years later; Nottingham played Sheffield in 1771; whilst Oxfordshire had a cricket club of its own before the end of the century. But though the process was extensive and rapid, it did not cut deep. Cricket cannot be learnt in a day, and for many a year to come its mastery was to be confined to its proper home.

We cannot here review, except in the barest outline, the earliest struggles for county supremacy. But we can begin with one very significant fact in James Love's famous poem on the Kent and England match, to which I shall refer presently. The poet says in his "Argument to the Second Book" that "Kent challenges *all* the other counties."

Fierce Kent, ambitious of the world's applause,  
Against the World combin'd, asserts her cause;  
Gay Surrey sometimes triumphs o'er the Field,  
And fruitful Sussex cannot brook to yield.  
While London, Queen of Cities! proudly vies  
And often grasps the well-disputed Prize.

From which it would seem clear that London and the Weald (though there is mention in 1729 of Hampshire) really constituted cricketing England.

That "the prize" was "well disputed" we are left in no doubt when we study the results of the many matches from 1719 onwards, recorded in Waghorn's two books. Sussex, under their patrons Sir William Gage and the second Duke of Richmond, had a fine side in the thirties and forties; their richest vein of talent lay at

Slindon, and when that parish played The Londoners in 1742, and thereby suffered but their second defeat in forty-four matches, we may suspect that they were really equivalent to the county. Slindon was the home of the three brothers Newland, all of whom played for England in "Love's match," a feat unparalleled except by the Graces in 1880. Richard Newland was at this time the most famous player in England, and heavy bets were laid in great matches on his personal scores. A surgeon by profession, he was uncle and cricket-tutor to Richard Nyren, the famous "General" of the Hambledon Club. Surrey, too, often pressed Kent hard, and it may be news to many that the first great patron of that county was Frederick Louis, Prince of Wales: the Prince was devoted to the game—the first member of the Royal House for many a year thus to touch the sporting instincts of his people.

The question of county supremacy is further complicated by the fact that by this time heavy betting on matches was habitual, and the match-makers, wishing to ensure for themselves a sporting chance, would often "bar" or borrow one or more men of their rightful opponents.

But when all is said, Kent were the greatest "draw"; all their opponents at one time or another had to form alliances in meeting them, and it was not for nothing that Love wrote his poem in her honour. The occasion of that poem was the same Kent v. All England, played in the Artillery Ground on June 18, 1744. Described in the contemporary Press as "the greatest cricket match ever known," it was witnessed by a distinguished company, including the Prince of Wales, his brother, "Butcher" Cumberland, and Admiral Vernon, who sought, we may fancy, in these less strenuous fields to forget his disastrous expedition against Carthegena in the preceding year. It is further of unique interest as the first game of which the detailed scores have been preserved, and, as such, the first to be recorded in *Scores and Biographies*, where, by an error, it is post-dated two years. Tickets for admission were issued, and one of these still survives in the possession of the M.C.C.

James Love's real name was Dance: his father was the architect who designed the Mansion House, but the son, after a good education, went bankrupt and took to writing for and appearing on the stage. The poem is written in heroic couplets, after the fashion of the time. It opens with a panegyric on cricket as contrasted with all rival sports:—

Hail, Cricket! glorious, manly, British Game!  
First of all Sports! be first alike in Fame!

and goes on to tell how—

And now the Sons of Kent, immortal grown,  
By a long series of acquired Renown,

send out their challenge to "each several shire," and how the great Newland accepts it. He then describes the marshalling of the champions in the true Virgilian manner, and refers to the appointed "lists" in a passage so delightful that I must quote it and risk the wrath of a most "Honourable Company."

A Place there is where City-Warriors meet,  
Wisely determin'd not to fight, but eat.  
Where harmless Thunder rattles to the skies,  
While the plump Buff-Coat fires and shuts his eyes.  
To the pleas'd Mob the bursting Cannons tell  
At every circling Glass, how much they swill.

Love was obviously an eye-witness of the game, and his description of it goes with a rare swing. It was a desperate business. Kent had headed England by 13 runs on the first innings (53 to 40), but at their second hand the "Rest" had done much better, and Newland, with the best score of the match (18) already standing to his name, was going strong once more with 15 to his credit :—

The champion strikes. When scarce arriving fair,  
The glancing ball mounts upward in the air.  
The batsman sees it, and with mournful eyes  
Fixed on the ascending pellet as it flies,  
Thus suppliant claims the favour of the skies.  
O, mighty Jove, and all ye powers above,  
Let my regarded prayer your pity move ;  
Grant me but this : whatever youth shall dare  
Snatch at the prize descending through the air,  
Lay him extended on the grassy plain,  
And make his bold adventurous effort vain !  
He said : the powers attending his request,  
Granted one part, to winds consigned the rest.  
And now illustrious Sackville where he stood,  
The approaching ball with cautious pleasure viewed,  
At once he sees the chief's impending doom,  
And pants for mighty honours yet to come.  
Swift as the falcon darting on its prey,  
He springs elastic on the verdant way ;  
Sure of success, flies upward with a bound,  
Derides the slow approach, and spurns the ground.  
Prone slips the youth, yet glories in his fall,  
With arm extended shows the captive ball.

Eventually Kent are left with 58 to win ; their captain's orders are clearly to leave nothing to chance ; slowly the runs come, but the wickets keep falling, too, until—

The two last Champions even now are in,  
And but three Notches yet remain to win.  
When, almost ready to recant her Boast,  
Ambitious Kent within an Ace had lost ;  
The mounting Ball, again obliquely driven,  
Cuts the pure Aether, soaring up to Heaven.  
Waymark was ready ; Waymark all must own  
As sure a swain to catch as e'er was known ;  
Yet whether Jove and all-compelling Fate  
In their high will determined Kent should beat ;

Or the lamented Youth too much relied  
 On sure success and Fortune often tried.  
 The erring ball, amazing to be told !  
 Slipp'd through his outstretch'd hand and mock'd his hold.

And now the Sons of Kent compleat the Game  
 And firmly fix their everlasting Fame

For another thirty years and more Kent and Surrey battled for supremacy, and their two great matches in 1773 once again inspired the Muse to two poems, "Surry Triumphant" and "The Kentish Cricketers," both extensively quoted at the end of Waghorn's *Cricket Scores*. But before the end of the century the fame of Kent was declining, and the new renown of the Hambledon Club filling all ears. Moreover, the men of the Eastern Weald had other things to think about. In a song published in the early eighties, and referring, no doubt, to events of the previous decade, we read :—

When Royal George commanded  
 Militia to be raised,  
 The French would sure have landed  
 But for such youths as these.  
 Their oxen-stall and cricket ball  
 They left for martial glory.  
 The Kentish lads shall win the odds  
 Your fathers did before ye.

Again, when the coast from Calais to Etaples was ringed with the "Grande Armée," Kent answered the call, and the tents and marquees of the favourite ground on Coxheath Common gave place to other and more martial canvas.

The poems to which I have recently referred introduce us to some of the most famous patrons of early cricket. Love's is dedicated to the Earl of Sandwich (1718-1792); the noble lord, after whom the Sandwich Isles were named, was so devoted to the game that in 1745 we find him writing: "For I'll at your Board (the Admiralty), when at leisure from cricket"! Six years later he is captaining the Old Etonians against All England, and as late as 1770 he is caricatured, no doubt for political ends, with a bat in his hands.

The "Surry Triumphant" verses recall how—

The active Earl of Tankerville  
 An even bet did make  
 That in Bourne Paddock he would cause  
 Kent's chiefest hands to quake.  
 To see the Surrey cricketers  
 Out-bat them and out-bowl,  
 To Dorset's Duke the tidings came,  
 All in the Park at Knowle.

The fourth Earl of Tankerville, for long the greatest patron of Surrey cricket, played his last recorded match in 1781, but he was

subsequently one of the leading spirits in the White Conduit and Marylebone Clubs, and one of the authorities responsible for the revision of the Laws in 1774 and again in 1788.

His seat was at Mount Felix, near Walton-on-Thames, and there he kept in his employment, as gardener and butler, "Lumpy" Stevens and William Bedster, for long the leading bowler and batsman of the Surrey team.

But the greatest of all the "feudal lords" of cricket were the Sackvilles of Knole. In the very earliest county matches we find the two sons of the first Duke of Dorset, the Earl of Middlesex and Lord John Sackville, championing their county's players, and in the historic match of '44 it is Lord John who makes the critical catch. His son, the third Duke, was more than true to the family tradition. On his own estate he maintained three formidable players, Bowra, Minshull, and "Miller, of England's cricketers the best." He was himself a fine player, even if the poet's enthusiasm outran his judgment, as it did his grammar, when he wrote :—

Equalled by few he plays with glee,  
Nor peevish seeks for victory.  
His Grace for bowling cannot yield  
To none but Lumpy in the field.

He lived long enough to see the Marylebone Club, of which he was one of the first and most ardent promoters, finally established as the recognized authority in cricket; but his active participation in the game ended with his appointment as Ambassador and Plenipotentiary at the Court of Louis XVI. Even then, however, his interest was maintained, for in 1789 he arranged for an eleven, which included the Earl of Tankerville, to come over to Paris and play an exhibition match.

The team actually reached Dover, when they were met by their patron himself, whom the outbreak of revolution had forced to return to England.

An exact contemporary of the Duke's was the other great pillar of Kentish cricket, Sir Horatio Mann. His seats were at Bishopsbourne, near Canterbury, and at Linton, near Maidstone, the latter still in the family, though its owner has changed his name to one now even better known in connection with the county's cricket—Cornwallis. Again and again Sir Horatio will be found promoting and playing in Kent County matches, and it is not surprising that, with one famous even in those days for his gambling, stakes of 500 or 1,000 guineas on a game were no exception. On his own estates he kept the nucleus of a fine eleven—Aylward, "stolen" from Hambledon, as bailiff, and John and George Ring as huntsman and whipper-in. He was ever "agreeable, gay, and affable," and it is on record that he gladly consented to stand godfather to the



sons of two of his protégés, his bailiff, Aylward, and his namesake, "Noah," of the Hambledon Club.

Before we take the next step that is to land us in the midst of the great days of Hambledon, it may be of interest to consider the general status of cricket in this its first "historical" period, the atmosphere in which it was played, and the general contemporary attitude towards it.

In the pages of *The British Champion* in 1743 there appears a well-expressed, rather malevolent, and, we may suspect, not a little biased article, levelling a series of charges against the game. They may be summarized roughly as follows :—

(1) It is both ridiculous and highly unseemly that "lords and gentlemen, clergymen and lawyers, should associate themselves with butchers and cobblers in such diversions."

(2) These matches "draw numbers of people from their employment to the ruin of their families. It brings together crowds of apprentices and servants whose time is not their own. It propagates a spirit of idleness at a juncture when, with the utmost industry, our debts, taxes, and decay of trade will scarce allow us to get bread."

(3) "It is a most notorious and shameless breach of the laws, as it gives the most open encouragement to gambling."

The first charge we may dismiss forthwith as an instance of that snobbery which cricket has done as much as anything else to break down in England. The second is simply the Georgian parallel to the modern complaint that the cinema and League football are rapidly driving the country into ruin; it reflects the Aristotelian view of the "worker" as a living instrument, primarily designed to amass wealth for his master. I wonder what this Cato would have said to the crowds that watched the last "Tests" in Australia! There is, I suppose, this much at least to be said for him, that the popularity of cricket did become quite a serious problem in harvest time, and the writer of "Surry Triumphant" in 1773 could conclude his ballad with the prayer :—

God save the King, and bless the land  
With plenty and increase;  
And grant henceforth that idle games  
In harvest time may cease.

But the third item in the charge-sheet does demand serious consideration. In reading the "announcements" of cricket matches of the eighteenth century, as collected in Waghorn's books, no one could fail to remark the extent to which the game went hand-in-hand with wagering. The very first match recorded was, as we have seen already, played for £10 ahead, and wherever we turn in the contemporary Press we find stakes of 100 or 200 guineas the rule rather than the exception. Even matches between women,

first organized in 1745, involved heavy sums, though it is only fair to say that here and there we find a game played for more homely stakes, such as a whole lamb, a plum cake and a barrel of ale, eleven good hats and one for the umpire on the winning side ! The Earl of Sandwich's "Old Etonians v. England" matches at Newmarket in 1751 were played for £1,500, and in side-bets it was said at the time that "near £20,000 is depending."

No doubt many of the stakes in the "Play-bills" existed in the imagination of the promoters alone, and were announced simply to draw "the gate"; but that money did play a large part in eighteenth-century cricket there is no sort of question. In May 1748, for instance, a lawsuit was fought out over a betting debt in connection with one of the "championship" matches, and the comment of the learned judge was as follows: "Cricket is, to be sure, a manly game and not bad in itself, but it is the ill-use that is made of it, by betting above £10 upon it, that is bad and against the laws." A little later on in our history we shall see how this betting not only persisted, but became actually systematized, at Lord's of all places, and we shall read of its disastrous effects upon the players themselves.

Now it is not, I hope, very cynical to see in the money element an explanation of the frequent disorderly scenes that attended great matches. In 1731 a match on Chelsea Common terminated in a free fight among the spectators. In the same year the Duke of Richmond and his eleven were mobbed by the Richmond crowd, and some of them had their shirts torn off their backs, whilst six years later the press and disorder at a match on Kennington Common was so great that a poor woman was knocked down and had her leg broken, whereupon the Prince of Wales, who was a spectator, "was pleased to order her ten guineas." Finally, in a Kent and Surrey match of 1762 a dispute arose over a catch, the players themselves came to blows, several heads were broken, and a challenge issued between "two persons of distinction."

With some of the most prominent men in the kingdom connected with scenes of such questionable notoriety, it would have been surprising if they had altogether escaped the artillery of the satirists, even if the guns of some of that fraternity were spiked by the devotion to the game of Frederick Louis.

In 1712 a broadsheet, entitled "The Devil and the Peers," appeared in the streets of London attacking the Duke of Marlborough and Viscount Townsend for trying to curry favour with the electorate by ingratiating themselves with their children, to wit, that on a Sabbath Day in Windsor Forest they joined two boys in playing, and laid twenty guineas upon the result of, a game of cricket, "the innocent sport of their inferiors in Age and Grandeur."

Thirty years later Alexander Pope, "the immortal Whipper-snapper," has a sneer for someone, whom we strongly suspect to be Lord John Sackville, in the lines—

The Judge to dance his brother serjeant call,  
The Senator at cricket urge the ball.

As Andrew Lang remarked, "Oh, le grand homme, rien ne lui peut plaire." About the same time Horace Walpole can write of his own school-days at Eton: "An expedition against bargemen or a match at cricket may be very pretty things to recollect, but, thank my stars, I can remember things very near as pretty." But Horace, on his own confession, was "never quite a schoolboy."

Towards the end of the century Soame Jenyns re-echoes the notes of Pope in his—

England, when once of peace and wealth possessed,  
Began to think frugality a jest;  
So grew polite: hence all her well-bred heirs  
Gamesters and Jockeys turned, and Cricket-players.

Bitterest of all is an anonymous lampoon, entitled "The Noble Cricketers," published in 1778, and aimed at no less a target than our friends the Earl of Tankerville and the Duke of Dorset. Thus to the Duke :—

When Death (for Lords must die) your doom shall seal,  
What sculptured Honors shall your tomb reveal?  
Instead of Glory, with a weeping eye,  
Instead of Virtue pointing to the sky,  
Let Bats and Balls th' affronted stone disgrace,  
While Farce stands leering by, with Satyr face,  
Holding, with forty notches mark'd, a board—  
The noble triumph of a noble Lord!

Meanwhile his Grace would be explaining to the Shades that, while "Rome burned"—

We Truants midst th' Artillery Ground were straying,  
With Shoe-blacks, Barber's Boys, at Cricket playing!

But when all is said, and when we have made allowance for anti-Whig and anti-Royalist bias of political partisans and the vaporizings of those moralists who cannot abide the sight of anyone really enjoying himself, what does it all amount to? Of one thing we may be certain, that before the century had half run its course, Lord Chesterfield was echoing the sentiments of all that was best in England, when he wrote to his son, "If you have a right ambition, you will desire to excel all boys at cricket as well as in learning."

## CHAPTER IV

### THE HAMBLETON CLUB

FOR scarcely less than a century Hambledon has been almost universally regarded as the "Cradle of Cricket," and to many it may have been unwelcome disillusionment to find that to Kent rather than Hampshire is that honour due, that the "Artillery Ground" in London was famous before Broad-Halfpenny, and that even the length ball and the straight bat were at least attempted before David Harris and John Small had entered the field. But to the men of Hambledon glory enough remains: if they did not "find out cricket," they raised the game into an art, in the practice of which they excelled their own generation as surely as, under their own conditions, they would have equalled any other, and in exalting the club of a remote village until it was more than a match for All England, they wrote a story that reads like a romance.

That story has been told again and again, but by none so well as by those who originally wrote it. John Nyren was born at Hambledon on December 15, 1764. His father, Richard Nyren, himself a fine cricketer and nephew of the famous Sussex batsman, Richard Newland, kept for some years the "Bat and Ball" Inn overlooking the Hambledon ground, and was secretary to the club in its greatest days, so that young John must have grown up to the sound and sight of the game and been inspired to emulate the great deeds witnessed each summer on the downs upon which his windows looked.

The Nyrens were a Jacobite and Roman Catholic family, and a granddaughter of John Nyren's once told Mr. E. V. Lucas that she believed the name to be an intentional transposition of "Neyrne," made a little before the Hambledon era to disguise its connection with the "'15" and the "'45." John himself had as a boy learnt a little Latin from an old Jesuit, and, like three other great cricketers—John Small, Felix, and poor Charlie Blythe—was devoted to his fiddle. "Many a time have I taught the gipseys a tune during their annual visit to our village, thereby purchasing the security of our poultry yard. When the hand of the destroyer was stretched forth over the neighbouring roosts, our little Goshen was always

passed by." It was his music, as well as his natural charm and simplicity, that made him a welcome and familiar figure at the famous Sunday Evenings at Vincent Novello's, and it was here he met Charles Lamb, Leigh Hunt, and Charles Cowden Clarke. Now, it was the latter gentleman who collected and edited Nyren's book. What were the exact relations of author and editor? There are some who have allowed to Nyren only the provision of the subject matter, and given to the more professional Clarke all credit for the grace and the charm of style. The truth is hidden, and so will remain, but certain it is that together they proved a perfect combination, and have given us something that neither could have given alone. The book was published in 1833—a copy of the first edition lies on my table, and is as the apple of my eye. Some fifty years must, therefore, have separated Nyren, when he wrote it, from the zenith of the Hambledon's Club glory, the two decades from about 1768 onwards. That he is vague as to detail and very sparing of date and place is not, therefore, to be wondered at. He is the Herodotus, and not the Thucydides, of cricket, and not even the father of history himself could tell a tale with greater charm and spirit, or make his characters live more vividly in virtue of the "golden phrase." He possessed, so Cowden Clarke tells us, "an instinctive admiration of everything good and tasteful, both in Nature and Art," and, being himself a fine cricketer, that discrimination naturally extended to the game with which his memory will always be connected.

Nyren's book, when published, was fortunate enough to find in the Rev. John Mitford, of *The Gentleman's Magazine*, a reviewer fully qualified to do it justice. Though not a player of any distinction, Mitford was devoted to cricket, and on his estate at Benhall, in Suffolk, had provided a home for William Fennex, of whom we shall read as one of the greatest batsmen of the late Hambledon era. Mitford did Nyren the fullest justice in an article that cries aloud for quotation, and will not, so far as I am concerned, cry in vain.

It was his memoranda of conversation enjoyed with the aged Fennex that formed the basis of Pycroft's great work, *The Cricket Field*, but Pycroft, in writing his famous chapter, "The Hambledon Club and the Old Players," supplemented Mitford's manuscript by making a personal pilgrimage round the village houses of the last survivors of that illustrious age and by finding William Beldham at his home in Tilford still able and anxious to speak of it. That such reminiscences were far from being the garrulous wanderings of senility is surely proved by the fact that at the age of eighty-six Beldham walked the seven miles from his home to Godalming to see a match, while Fennex, when but eleven years younger, walked ninety miles in three days, carrying an umbrella, a bundle of

clothes, and three cricket bats, and spending in that time but three shillings !

Such then are our authorities, worthy indeed of their theme, and the cricketer who has not read them barely deserves the name. It has, however, been left to our own generation to complete, so far as is now possible, the Hambledon saga, and Mr. Ashley-Cooper's editions of Nyren, Mitford, and Pycroft are a memorial "more lasting than brass," alike to his scholarly and indefatigable research and to his devotion to Hambledon and all that it stands for.

"If you want to know, sir," said Beldham to Pycroft, "the time the Hambledon Club was formed, I can tell you by this : when we (Farnham) beat them in 1780, I heard Mr. Powlett say : 'Here have I been thirty years raising our club, and are we to be beaten by a single Parish ?' " Now the Rev. Charles Powlett, a son of the third Duke of Bolton and Lavinia Fenton, the original "Polly Peachum," is not very likely to have been connected with the club before his appointment to the living of Itchen Abbas in the early sixties. Yet Beldham was probably more accurate than he knew in his evidence, for in the year 1750 Hants faced London single-handed, and in 1756 the Hambledon Club, then for the first time mentioned, opposed the strong Dartford side on the Artillery Ground. Eight years later "the gentlemen of Hambledon, called Squire Lamb's Club," met Chertsey, with "great sums of money depending," and 1767 Hambledon won two matches by the unprecedented margins of 262 and 224 "notches," a feat that may very likely have inspired the Rev. Reynell Cotton, master of Hyde Abbey School, Winchester, to write his famous "Cricket Song" for the club :—

Then fill up your glass !—He's the best that drinks most ;  
Here's the Hambledon Club ! Who refuses the toast ?  
Let us join in the praise of the Bat and the Wicket,  
And sing in full chorus the Patrons of Cricket.

"Squire Lamb" remains an enigma, though there was a Squire Land who was a little later "Master of the H.H." But history is probably right in ascribing to Charles Powlett the chief glory of developing, even if he did not found, the club. He, Dehaney, and some others of the first known membership were Westminster boys in the forties, so would have been in close touch with the "advanced" London game, and, it may be, were responsible for pruning away such local peculiarities as Nyren's archæology hints at. Certainly Powlett, as "steward," was the life and soul of the club for many years, piloted it through at least one crisis, and, when the end came, was the last to abandon the sinking ship.

In September 1768 Hambledon challenged Kent and beat them easily : in that match "Mr. Small, of Petersfield, fetched above seven score notches off his own bat." One of the most picturesque

figures in all cricket history, John Small, was born in 1737, and lived for all but the first six of his eighty-nine years of life at Petersfield, where he was for seventy-five years a member of the Church choir, playing the tenor violin until the year of his death. Originally a shoemaker, he later became a gamekeeper, and regularly took his "seven-mile tour" before setting out for a match. All his spare time he devoted to the making of bats and balls, and hung before his house a painted sign which stated :—

Here lives John Small,  
Makes Bat and Ball,  
Pitch a Wicket, Play at Cricket  
With any man in England.

It was no idle boast, for indeed he was for years the first batsman in the land. Once he kept up his wicket all three days of a match against All England, while, when "Lumpy" Stevens clean bowled him in Bishopsbourne Paddock in 1772, it was acclaimed a nine-days' wonder, not having been done "for several years"! In May 1775 there was played on the Artillery Ground a match between five of Hambledon and five of Kent, each with one given man: it was a desperate game, and when Small, the last man, went in, 14 runs were still wanted. "Lumpy" Stevens was the given man for Kent, and, naturally, did all the bowling, and at the crisis was in such form that several times he bowled the ball through Small's wicket without touching either of the stumps or the bail. Hambledon got home, but the memory of "Lumpy's" ill-luck remained, and led soon afterwards to the addition of the third stump to the wicket, and so contributed directly to the "straight and defensive" style in batting. One of the protagonists of the straight-bat revolution, certainly its finest exponent in that age, Small turned his skill as bat-maker to account (Dark of Lord's was his apostle in the trade), and worked up a straightened and shouldered blade, with which he defied the new "length" bowling, and continued to execute against it his favourite strokes, the "draw," and the off-drive, with left leg well across and the wrists in full play. Who knows but what he owed something to the intuition of a woman, for Mrs. Small was enthusiasm itself for the game, and any match day at Hambledon you might have seen her hurrying up to the ground from Petersfield: she always carried a green umbrella of enormous dimensions, which she would flourish excitedly in order to signal her husband's hit, shouting the while, "Run, man, run; you'll be out!"

Small's "forte" was defence, Tom Sueter's attack. The latter, says Nyren, was the first man to break through the old rule of fast-footed play: he would jump in and hit it "straight off or straight on; and, egad! it went as if it had been fired." Sueter, too, was the first man to master "the cut" which the new bowling

had now made possible, but it was as a stumper that he won his greatest fame. "What a handful of steel-hearted soldiers are in an important pass, such was Tom in keeping the wicket. As a proof of his quickness and skill, I have numberless times seen him stump a man out with Brett's tremendous bowling."

This Brett, with Richard Nyren, was the club's first bowler, and his pace and accuracy made him a serious rival to "Lumpy" as the best in England. Nyren was left-handed, slower, but "always to a length," and the master of every honourable device in the game. He was the unquestioned "General" of the Hambledonians in all their matches, and with his eye for talent soon marked the possibilities of the little farmer, Lamborn. With the old-fashioned bowling it was quite a common thing for the ball to be given a twist, or bias, as it was then called, from leg to off, but here was a man who could reverse the process—the first "off-spinner" in history; and when All England played Hambledon "this new trick of his so bothered the Kent and Surrey men that they tumbled out one after another as if they had been picked off by a rifle corps"!

Such were some of the leading figures in the first Hambledon eleven known to fame, the eleven of the "Old Players" whom Beldham affected somewhat to despise, but then he can never have seen them in their prime. Somewhere about 1770 the club had a run of ill-success and was on the eve of being dissolved, but they determined to have one more try, met Surrey on the Laleham Burway ground, beat them by one run, and never again looked back. In the next ten years, Nyren tells us, they played fifty-one matches against "England, etc.," and gained twenty-nine of them: the records of the time, so far as they have proved recoverable, substantially confirm the claim.

"The arena of their glory, the Marathon ennobled by their victories, and sometimes enriched by their blood," was Broad-Halfpenny, a swelling shoulder of down some two miles to the north-east of the village itself. Some thirty years ago it had become plough-land, to the horror of the cricket pilgrim, but now it is back in turf again, safe and secure, we may hope for all time, in the pious keeping of Winchester College. To celebrate its rescue, a match was played there in July 1925 between the College Eleven and the Hambledon Club: as one privileged to take part in it, I can myself attest the delight of playing upon that fine and lively turf, as fair a wicket as ever John Small found it, with the cloud-shadows chasing each other over Chidden Down to the north, and the larks singing overhead. Once again Hambledon were victors, captained by Mr. Whalley-Tooker, a descendant of one of the original members, and once again the field, we may be sure, "echoed to the cheers of a soundless, clapping host."

In the old days there was a "lodge" erected on the ground



"for the convenience of members," and ladies were catered for by the booths of Barber and Richard Nyren, in which it was hoped that beef, ham, chickens, and tarts would, with the help of the fine down air, stand in the place of "Marbres, Aspigues, Blanc Manges, etc." The true club house, the "Bat and Ball" Inn, still stands, looking across the road on to the centre of the down: but time has not dealt kindly with it, nor suffered it to preserve even a little of the romance that should properly invest it. The old sign-board is gone—to make fuel, it is said, one wintry night; the first iron gauge for testing the width of bats has gone too, just pirated in quite recent years by some gentleman who "took a fancy to it," and the last of the old club chairs met an irrevocable fate, when Farmer Someone, "a very heavy-sterned man," as the landlord put it, sank into it one day and "came right down"; nor can its cellars any longer yield anything comparable with that immortal viand (for it was more than liquor), on which John Nyren waxed so lyrical, "Ale that would flare like turpentine, genuine Boniface, that would put the souls of three butchers into one weaver." Well for John Nyren that he cannot see the change since the days when he was but "a farmer's pony" to the Hambledon Club, and before his father, its "head and right arm," had gone to join old Richard Newland in the Elysian fields.

In the early eighties the club found another home on Windmill Down, now a fir-plantation, much closer to the village, and about this time a new generation of players begin to appear in its ranks. Perhaps the beginning of the change is to be found in that defeat of Hambledon by Farnham in 1780 which so shocked Charles Powlett: certainly the greatest figures of the new régime were western Surrey men.

First a word or two on Tom Walker, whose inventive genius does not enjoy the celebrity which it may fairly claim. As a batsman so sound and steady that Lord Frederick Beauclerk, cricketer and divine, would dash his hat down on the pitch and call him "a confounded old beast," and so successful as to win from his contemporaries the name of "Old Everlasting," it is yet as a bowler that he should find his niche in history.

"I told you, sir," said Beldham, "that in my early days all bowling was what we called fast, or, at least, a moderate pace. The first lobbing slow bowler I ever saw was Tom Walker. When, in 1792, All England played Kent, I did feel so ashamed of such baby bowling; but, after all, he did more than even David Harris himself." But Walker was far from content with this success. A few years later he came out as the positive originator of the new "throwing bowling." What was the exact form it took is difficult to decide, but there can be no doubt that it was the prototype of the "march of intellect revolution" of 1827-1830. Both Beldham

and Nyren state in so many words that John Willes, of Kent, to whom the credit of the innovation is generally, and even on his own tombstone, assigned, did no more than revive the style which Walker had originated, but from which he was prohibited by the Hambledon Club, as being "foul play."

Of William Beldham much could be written. Born near Farnham in 1766, he died at Tilford in the ninety-seventh year of his age. For thirty-five years, without a break, his batting dominated the great matches, and even when he was verging on the Psalmist's allotted span, he was "barred" from inclusion in ordinary county fixtures. He was "safer than the Bank," says John Nyren, and yet a most brilliant hitter. There was no more beautiful sight than to see him make himself up to hit the ball, and no finer treat in cricketing than to watch him at the wicket face to face with David Harris.

Over the south door of the Long Room at Lord's there hangs a very beautiful picture of him, seated, leaning on his bat, in tall hat and pleated smock: it must have been even so that Mitford found him when, in the evening of his days, he visited "the great, the glorious, the unrivalled William Beldham" in his cottage home at Tilford, and left of that visit a record which need never fear oblivion. "It was a study for Phidias to see Beldham rise to strike, the grandeur of the attitude, the settled composure of the look, the piercing lightning of the eye, the rapid glance of the bat, were electrical. Men's hearts throbbed within them, their cheeks turned pale and red. Michael Angelo should have painted him. Beldham was great in every hit, but his peculiar glory was the cut. Here he stood with no man beside him, the laurel was all his own; it was like the cut of a racket. His wrist seemed to turn on springs of the finest steel. He took the ball, as Burke did the House of Commons, between wind and water; not a moment too soon or too late. Beldham still survives. He lives near Farnham, and in his kitchen, black with age, but, like himself, still untouched with worms, hangs the trophy of his victories, the delight of his youth, the exercise of his manhood, and the glory of his age—his BAT."

Last, and greatest, of the Hambledon bowlers comes David Harris. Born at Elvetham, in Hampshire, in 1754, he was a potter by trade, and perhaps his work lent a peculiar suppleness and strength to his fingers, which would account for the extraordinary life and fire of his bowling off the pitch. Of his generous and warm-hearted nature Nyren speaks with unconcealed affection. "He was one of the rare species that link man to man in bonds of fellowship by good works, that inspire confidence and prevent the structure of society from becoming disjointed"; and yet, "I do not mean that he was a *canter*. Oh no! No one ever thought of standing on guard and buttoning up his pocket in Harris's company." When

first he joined the club he was only a raw countryman, and deplorably addicted to bowling full tosses ; but old Richard Nyren took him in hand, and preached to him the great principle of "three-quarter " or length bowling, and David, as one would expect from a man of his parts, set himself to master the art. Many a time, an old cricketer told Pycroft, you might have seen him practising at dinner-time and after hours all the winter through. The result was a bowler who, in grandeur of method, in accuracy of pitch, in devastation of effect, dominated his own generation, was accorded by its immediate successors the isolation of outstanding genius, and remains to-day, 150 years since he first knew Broad-Halfpenny, one of the few supreme figures in the history of the game.

"He was always first chosen of all men in England," says Beldham, and Mitford tells the same story. "There have been a hundred, a thousand orators ; there never was but one David Harris. Many men make good speeches, but few men can deliver a good ball. Many men can throw down an enemy, but Harris could overthrow the strongest wicket. Cicero once undermined the conspiracy of Catiline, and Harris once laid prostrate even the stumps of Beldham."

It seems generally true that bowling is the dominating factor in cricket, determining, that is to say, the general characteristics of the game, and especially the style and method of the batsman. Of course, there are exceptions, as when the genius of "the Champion," for a time, practically killed fast bowling, and promoted the growth of the off-theory school on the diamond cut diamond principle. But it was the off-theory that emasculated batting of the old leg-strokes, and it has been the swerve and the googly, quite as much as the Jam Sahib's back-play that have led to the development of "modern batting." Even so, it was David Harris's bowling in the last two decades of the eighteenth century that led to the fundamental revolution in batting which determined the whole subsequent development of the game. Now, in Harris's bowling there were three main features—length, accuracy, and "nip" from the pitch. He was not the first of the length bowlers by any means—"Lumpy" and Richard Nyren had both shown him the way. In accuracy of pitch he may not have been superior to the former, though we read that where the turf was thin Harris's deliveries would wear a small patch bare of it ; but he was the first of all bowlers to combine length and direction with real pace, and, above all, to make the ball "lift " quickly from the pitch. For this quality his peculiar action, of which Nyren's description is famous, and in which the ball was, as it were, forced away from the level of his armpit, was no doubt primarily responsible : "Like the Pantheon in Akenside's hymn," says Mitford, "it was simply and severely great," and Lord

Frederick Beauclerk, one of the very greatest players of the next generation, described it as the grandest thing of the kind he ever saw. Of its effect, then, there can be no question. His balls, says Nyren, were very little beholden to the ground when pitched; it was but a touch and up again. And woe to the man who did not go in to block them, for they had such a peculiar curl that they would grind his fingers against the bat. And again—and here is the crux of the whole matter—"To Harris's bowling I attribute the great improvement that was made in hitting, and, above all, in stopping; for it was utterly impossible to remain at the crease when the ball was tossed to a fine length. You were obliged to get in, or it would be about your hands, or the handle of your bat, and every cricketer knows where its next place would be."

To this new problem batting reacted. The "old players," said Beldham, stayed "puddling about their crease and had no freedom," and he declared that it was he, Fennex, and Harry Walker who first opened their eyes as to what could be done with the bat, Walker by his cutting, and he and Fennex by forward play. At first their methods shocked the critics: "Hey! hey! boy! What is this? Do you call that play?" said his old father to Fennex, when he first "went in and laid down a ball before it had time to rise," and "You do frighten me there jumping out of your ground," said Squire Powlett to Beldham when he did the same: but Beldham for thirteen years averaged 43 a match, and Fennex was the tutor and model upon whom Fuller Pilch founded his play.

At the end of his little book Nyren enumerates the names of the Hambledon team when it was in its glory, and concludes: "No eleven in England could have had any chance with these men, and I think they might have beaten any twenty-two." That this was no idle boast we may surmise from the fact that in June 1777 they met a fully representative eleven of England on "The Vine" at Sevenoaks, and beat them by an innings and 168 runs. It was in this match that James Aylward, a great left-handed batsman, stayed in the whole of two days to make 167: it was also one of the first games in which three stumps are known to have been used. For their "foreign" matches the eleven travelled together in a caravan, or "machine," as it was termed in the "minute" directing Mr. Richards, the club treasurer, to see to its purchase; but for their home games they assembled independently, the Surrey contingent regularly riding the thirty odd miles from their homes and being allowed to debit the "Horse Hire" to their expenses.

The founding of the M.C.C. in 1787 was really the death-knell of the Hambledon Club: more and more did London become the centre of great cricket, and steadily the membership declined, and the players were lured away by the golden magnet. Fitly enough it is at Lord's that in 1793 Hambledon played its last-recorded match.

But before we suffer this great eleven to drop back into the mists of memory, let us try to picture once more the turf on which they played, and to people it once again with the figures which still stand out fresh, vigorous, and personal from John Nyren's canvas.

It is a fair June morning, and some twenty minutes before ten, as we mount the gentle rise that leads out of the Hambledon vale on to the sunny shoulders of Broad-Halfpenny Down; wickets will be pitched at ten o'clock, but play will not start for, perhaps, another half-hour, so we have time to look about us.

There, on the edge of the close-cut turf, stands a little group in serious converse, debating, no doubt, as to where exactly they shall pitch the wicket, and discussing their tactics for the day. In the centre is the head and right arm of the club, Richard Nyren, who has been on the ground early, as well he may, for does not his bedroom-window look straight over the pitch? He has just "had words," firm, but respectful, with the great Sir Horace Mann, of Kent, about that rising young batsman, James Aylward, whom Sir Horace is trying to filch away from Hambledon with the lure of a bailiff's post on his own estate at Bishopsbourne (and lure him he did; but the best batsman made but a poor bailiff, we are told). The old "General" has registered his protest in the "facc to face, unflinching, uncompromising" manner that was second nature to him; he has "differed from his superior without trenching on his dignity or losing his own," and, that done, turns to the more immediate problem of driving into the thickest skull of Lamborn, the little Farmer, the fact that with his heaven-sent gift of an off-break, it is essential that he should give the ball a chance of hitting the wicket by pitching it outside the off-stump. That "plain-spoken little bumpkin" has not yet learnt his lesson; an hour or two hence he will miss by a hair's breadth the leg-stump of the Duke of Dorset, and "forgetting, in his eagerness and delight, the style in which we were always accustomed to impress our aristocratical playmates with our acknowledgment of their rank and station," he will bawl out, "Ah, it was *tedious* near you, sir," and so set the whole ground laughing.

Now, while these weighty matters are being debated near the ground's centre, there float out from the open windows of the club-room in the "Bat and Ball" the notes, true, pure, and strong, of two voices singing in harmony: it is Tom Sueter and George Leer, fit partners in song with their tenor and counter-tenor, for are they not partners in the game? Tom Sueter, as keeper of the wicket, and George Leer, "sure as a sandbank," at long-stop, who could stand a whole match against Brett's bowling, and not lose more than two runs.

Meanwhile, up the road from Petersfield comes John Small

and the first to greet him is the Duke of Dorset, and warmly, too, we may be sure, for their mutual respect and liking has lately been pledged in no ordinary manner : the Duke had sent Small a handsome fiddle, and Small, like a true and simple-hearted Englishman, returned the compliment by sending his Grace two bats and balls, "also paying the carriage." His arrival in the club-room is greeted with a buzz of mingled amusement and admiration, for the story has got abroad how an evening or two ago, when on his way by a field path to a musical party, he was attacked by a vicious bull, and how, "with the characteristic coolness and presence of mind of a good cricketer, he began playing on his bass, to the admiration and perfect satisfaction of the mischievous beast." Small is "Old Small" now, for his son, "young John," has already made his name, and it is some time since "Lumpy" Stevens astonished the cricketing world by clean bowling the father. But he is still the straightest bat in England, and is looking forward eagerly to another meeting with his old rival. The latter, of course, is out in the middle, anxiously inspecting the ground, in the hopes of a "brow" off which his balls will shoot, but with a thought or two for the good dinner awaiting him at the end of the day in the "Bat and Ball"; for does he not owe his very nickname to the fact that at one of their dinners he once did eat a whole apple-pie!

But who are those posting up to the ground on horses that show some signs of a longish journey? The first is none other than the great Beldham himself, whose crisp, fair hair and fresh glowing cheeks have already earned for him from his clubmates the name of "Silver Billy," and, by his side, a little keen-eyed man, now past the time for active play, but still an acknowledged judge and tutor of the game, Harry Hall, ginger-bread maker, and apostle of the high left-elbow and straight bat; these have been up betimes, for they have ridden from Farnham, and will ride back there again when the match has been won.

But, from further yet afield, from their lands near the Devil's Punch Bowl at Hindhead, come two others, "those anointed clod-stumpers, the Walkers, Tom and Harry. Never, sure, came two such unadulterated rustics into a civilized community." Harry was left-handed, and, as hitter, his half-hour was as good as Tom's afternoon, but the brother was, for all that, the greater man. Look at him where he stands with his hard, ungainly, scrag-of-mutton frame, his long spider legs, and his wilted apple-John face; see him run for that ball, he moves like the rude machinery of a steam-engine in the infancy of construction, every member seems to fly to the four winds, he toils like a tar on horseback. Yet this same ungainly Tom will rival even Beldham himself; he will go in first, and as often as not be not out at the end. He will never speak while at the wicket; but, whether at practice or in an

innings *v.* All England, be the same phlegmatic, unmoved man, a very Washington of cricketers. Harris once bowled 170 balls to him for 1 run, but Walker once made 95 not out and 102 in one and the same match on the White Conduit Fields. Well did Mitford write: "You might as well attempt to get Wellington from a field of battle, or Bentley from a Greek Poet, as to get Walker from his wicket."

Last and late upon the ground comes Noah Mann, from North Chapel, 20 miles or more away in Sussex, short, strong, active, swarthy as a gipsy, and the fastest runner in all the club; all eyes are on him as he gallops on to the ground and, leaning low over his saddle, swoops up the handkerchiefs that his friends have tossed down for him—a familiar and ever-popular feat with the now crowded ring.

A few hours hence he will be at the wicket, and woe betide the bowler that tosses one up within reach of those impetuous arms, he will hit it away for 10, as he did one day on Windmill Down; or if the game ends early he will make a match at running with any man on the field, wait on him for half the distance, and then pass him and romp home a victor whom Nyren never saw vanquished.

And so we will leave them, this great eleven, as Mitford left them ninety years ago, with homage on our lips: "Troy has fallen and Thebes is a ruin. The pride of Athens is decayed, and Rome is crumbling to the dust. The philosophy of Bacon is wearing out, and the Victories of Marlborough have been overshadowed by greater laurels. All is vanity, but cricket; all is sinking in oblivion but you. Greatest of all elevens, fare ye well!"

## CHAPTER V

### LORD'S, AND SOME EARLY CHAMPIONS

WE have seen that "l.b.w." was first recognized as a penal offence in the revised Laws of 1774, but it is remarkable that only "premeditated shabbiness" was legislated against, for the law reads: "If the striker puts his leg before the wicket *with a design* to stop the ball." This evidently proved too much for the umpires, and fourteen years later the psychological condition had disappeared. One other strange provision in the earliest Laws must be noticed: "When the ball is hit up, either of the strikers may hinder the catch in his running ground, or if it is hit directly across the wicket, the other player may place his body anywhere within the swing of his bat so as to hinder the bowler from catching it, but he must neither strike at it nor touch it with his hands." There must, it seems, have been some lusty "obstruction" between batsmen, wicket-keeper, and bowler in the old days.

But by 1788 both these anomalies have disappeared in the first edition of the Laws issued by the Marylebone Club, and it is now time that we describe the origin of that greatest of cricket institutions.

The "Revision" of 1774 had been undertaken by a committee of noblemen and gentlemen, including nearly all the great figures of whom I have already spoken, which met at "The Star and Garter," Pall Mall. Now this house was a favourite rendezvous of the members of a select London social club called the "Je ne sais quoi Club," of which "The First Gentleman in Europe" was the perpetual chairman. About 1780 the cricket enthusiasts among the members began to play the game together in the White Conduit Fields of Islington. At this time it seems to have been a public ground, managed by the proprietor of the tavern of that name, who as early as 1766 had advertised "Bats and Balls for Cricket and a convenient field to play in." In 1785 a regular club had been formed, and "The White Conduit" played its first recorded home match on June 20th, beating the Gentlemen of Kent by 304 runs. A year later came the momentous decision destined to affect and dominate the whole subsequent history of the game: it seems that a section of the White Conduit Club began to resent the public and rather primitive surroundings of the Islington matches, and



accordingly two of its members, the Earl of Winchilsea and Charles Lennox, took active steps to secure a new private ground, more worthy of their club's pretensions. Now, in the service of the White Conduit, and, it would seem, more particularly of the noble Earl, there was a certain Thomas Lord, who acted as ground-bowler to the club, and no doubt made himself generally useful.

Lord came of a sturdy, and once prosperous, yeoman stock. His father, a man of considerable property in Yorkshire, and a Catholic, had sunk his fortune in an attempt to aid Prince Charlie in the '45, and his son had then been forced to seek a livelihood in whatever way he could. A man of great personal charm, of good looks, to which Morland's portrait does fair justice, and of a business capacity which subsequent events were soon to prove, Lord soon made his mark with his patrons of the White Conduit, and when Winchilsea and Lennox proposed to him that he should open a private ground himself, and promised him their personal support and reimbursement in case of loss, he was not slow to accept.

That same winter he approached the agent of the Portman family and arranged to rent from them a parcel of ground lying in the then almost completely rural district where Dorset Square now stands. For the rest of the winter and throughout the ensuing spring he worked unceasingly to get his ground in order, and on May 31, 1787, the first ball in a match was bowled at "Lord's."

This first match was actually between two minor counties, Middlesex and Essex, but in the following month the White Conduit Club took the field in a well-fought game against the first named, and then a fortnight later, with six given men, met and were defeated by All England. A year later the last step has been taken, the White Conduit has become the Marylebone Cricket Club, and the laws of cricket have been revised and re-issued under the seal of that, henceforth unchallenged, authority.

For this great event gratitude is primarily due to the two men who started Lord upon his enterprise. The Earl of Winchilsea was an Etonian, and there have been few keener cricketers: a zealous patron of the Hambledon, White Conduit, and Marylebone Clubs in turn, for several years his name is constantly found in the big matches, and the amount of travelling involved—in days of the postchaise and coach, be it remembered—must often have been prodigious. But, unlike the "two idlest lords" of the early broadside, he delayed his entry into the cricket field until the claims of honour were satisfied, for during the American War he served as a volunteer himself and raised a regiment of infantry at the cost to himself of £20,000. By a curious chance we find his name linked with that of the other great patron of Lord's, Charles Lennox, under circumstances far different from the peaceful atmosphere of the ground and the game they both

loved. On April 26, 1789, Lennox fought his famous duel on Wimbledon Common with King George III's brother, the Duke of York, and on that occasion Winchilsea was his second. It is pleasant, incidentally, to read that the two combatants were reconciled a year later on Lord's Ground at the match between England and the Hambledon Club.

Charles Lennox, subsequently fourth Duke of Richmond, was a great all-round athlete, a natural runner and jumper whom few could rival. It was as a batsman and a wicket-keeper that for twenty-two years he made his mark in high-class cricket. His enthusiasm for the game was never dormant long. When the allied army was quartered in and near Brussels before Waterloo, he arranged a cricket match for the officers of the Brigade of Guards, and incidentally it was his Duchess that gave the famous Quatre Bras Ball. Subsequently, when Governor-General of Canada, cricket was played under his ægis upon the Heights of Abraham. Concerning his death, there is a curious and melancholy coincidence not unconnected with the game, related to Mr. E. V. Lucas by one of John Nyren's granddaughters. Her grandfather, she said, was very fond of animals, and was once bitten by a mad dog, but without ill-effect. In subsequent years, when the Duke of Richmond met him on Lord's ground, he would often question him closely concerning the incident, having himself a great dread of hydrophobia. I do not know what the "new psychology" will make of it, but the fact remains that the same Charles Lennox, Duke of Richmond, died of hydrophobia from the bite of a pet fox in 1819.

By the year 1800 "Lord's" is an institution established high and dry beyond all rivalry. The Marylebone Club has twice again revised the laws of cricket, and is recognized to be the supreme authority on the game. All the leading amateur players are to be found on its members' list, and it is now strong enough to meet unaided such counties as Hampshire and Middlesex; its ground is the accepted venue for all the great matches of the year, and the focus of ambition for every aspiring cricketer.

But side by side with the growing popularity of the game and its headquarters, London was expanding its restless limits east and west and south and north; the inevitable result followed, Mr. Portman, the landlord, thinking it proper to raise his rent, and Lord being thereby forced to seek fresh fields and pastures new.

The old agreement did not expire till Lady Day, 1810, but Lord had no intention of facing a blank season, and by May 1809 had secured and opened his second ground, part of the St. John's Wood estate, belonging to the Eyre family. During this and the next year the M.C.C. continued to play on the old ground, the new field being tenanted by a relatively unimportant club, but during the winter 1810-1811, Lord removed the turf from the first to the second, and

the premier club finally abandoned its earliest home. For some reason that is not now apparent, this second ground never caught on with the Marylebone members, and, though various scratch matches were played from time to time, the M.C.C. only appear to have played there three times in all (in 1813), and never to have won a match. This rather ominous situation was terminated once and for all when Parliament determined that the newly proposed Regent Canal should be cut straight across the middle of the ground. Still undaunted, Lord applied for and obtained from the same Eyre family a new parcel of land, situated some half-mile north of the old ground at North Bank. Once more during the winter of 1813-1814 he removed the old turf to its new quarters, enclosed the ground in a high fence, and built a tavern and a pavilion, and on June 22, 1814, the first match, M.C.C. v. Hertfordshire, was played on the third, and, we may surely believe, last "Lord's Ground."

And now having traced thus shortly the vicissitudes of the greatest of cricket clubs, and seen it at last safely established in the surroundings that we know and love, let us glance in review at some of the cricketers and the cricket that graced "Lord's" from its opening year in 1787 until, forty years later, we reach one of those definite turning-points that mark decisively a new phase in the game's development. At the outset let us realize that during this period bowling was still underhand, and that, with a few exceptions, hereafter to be noticed, it was tending rather towards the slow and lobbing variety as opposed to the quick "touch and up again" school, of which David Harris had been the protagonist and unrivalled exponent. Batting was rapidly developing on the principles of the "New Hambledon" style, and year after year scores—at least in the big matches—were increasing in size, and hitting in power and variety. Then, again, in both departments of the game the professional element has almost a monopoly. For instance, when in 1807 Surrey met and beat England at Lord's, there is not a single amateur in the county side, while of the four included in England, two went in Nos. 10 and 11 and did not bowl, or, at least, did not get a wicket.

But among the professionals there were some unquestionably very great players. William Beldham, who first appeared for Hambledon in 1787, was now at his zenith. For thirty-five years his career in great matches was unbroken, and for the greater part of that time he was the first pick in all England; for years he averaged 43 per match; in 1794 he scored 72 and 102 in one match for Surrey against England, and time after time—and particularly at Lord's—he is to be found with 50's, 60's, 70's against his name, when for all others a mere 20 carried renown. He was also a fine slow bowler and a wonderful field; twice he caught seven men out in a single match. Next, and not so very far behind him, comes

that other Hambledonian, Tom Walker, now another pillar of the invincible Surrey side, and No. 1 for his county, the Players and England; not for nothing was he called by his comrades "Old Everlasting."

A few years later we come to perhaps the greatest all-round player of the epoch—William Lambert of Surrey. Born at Burstow in that county in 1779, he first appeared at Lord's against All England in his twenty-third year, and for the next sixteen years he was probably the greatest force in English cricket. As a batsman he was of the forward driving school. "He stood with left foot a yard in advance, swaying his bat and body as if to attain momentum, and reaching forward almost to where the ball must be pitched." Modern theorists of the "steady head and eye" order may cavil at such a stance, but we can only judge by results, and of the "momentum" of his drives there can be no question. He dominated the slow bowling of his age, and, always on the attack, and having, so it seemed, the bowler at his mercy, "he hit," said Beldham, "what no one else could meddle with." One record at least stands to Lambert's name: in July 1817 at Lord's he scored, for the first time in the history of the game, two hundreds in a single match—107 and 157. Not for seventy-six years was this feat to be paralleled at Lord's in a first-class match, until in 1893 A. E. Stoddart scored 195 not out and 124 for Middlesex against Notts.

But though, as we have seen, the professionals at this time almost monopolized the best cricket, there were just one or two amateur players to challenge their supremacy. Greatest of these—indeed, the greatest figure in all the long history of the Marylebone Club—was the Reverend Lord Frederick Beauclerk, D.D. The fourth son of the fifth Duke of St. Albans, and therefore, like Charles Lennox, descended from Charles II, his lordship, like many a younger son before him, took Holy Orders, but we are bound to admit that he never seems to have allowed his clerical duties to interfere materially with the claims of cricket. It was Lord Winchilsea who first discovered him, bowling for the Cambridge eleven—that was thirty-six years before the first 'Varsity match—and brought him to Lord's at the age of eighteen to play for the M.C.C. against Kent. For thirty-five years he played in "great matches," and for wellnigh sixty he was a familiar figure at Lord's, where for the greater part of the time his word was absolute law. At first his fame rested principally on his bowling, which was slow, very accurate, remarkably quick from the pitch, and regulated by an unrivalled knowledge of the game. "He did find out a man's hit so very soon," said an old player, "and set his field to foil it without loss of time."

Eventually the measure of his bowling was more or less taken by the new quick-footed, driving school of batsmen. In batting he

was on the slow side, but a most finished forward player, and when in the mood his off-hitting was brilliant and severe. For many years he was the only amateur who played regularly for All England ; he made eight hundreds at Lord's, and when fifty-one years old scored 99 for the "B's" against the Rest.

Unfortunately, Lord Frederick was wellnigh as unscrupulous as he was accomplished. He openly avowed that in match-making his cricket was worth 600 guineas a year to him, and though this in itself does not necessarily bespeak dishonesty, it is hardly consonant with a presidential speech when in 1838 he spoke of cricket as "unalloyed by love of lucre and mean jealousies." It is on record that he was the last man to "count the game beyond the prize," and frequently when batting with a rival could hardly be induced to run the other's "notches," and, when he lost a match or failed himself, would try to bribe Bentley, the official scorer, to suppress the score. Not for nothing, we may be sure, was the verse written :—

My Lord he comes next, and will make you all stare  
With his little tricks, a long way from fair.

But—

Though his playing is fine—give the Devil his due,  
There is very few like him at the game take it through.

In June 1817 there was played at Nottingham a match which will serve as well, if not better, than any other as a peg upon which to hang some further comments upon the last epoch of "ancient"—as opposed to "prehistoric"—cricket, for ten years later the "middle ages" will have dawned.

This particular match was between an England eleven, got up and captained by Lord Frederick, and twenty-two of Nottingham. These were the days of the Luddite riots, and the magistrates had warned the players that if they continued play after seven in the evening they would not be responsible for the consequences. Stumps were therefore pulled up punctually at that hour, but no sooner was this done than the crowd swarmed on to the ground. Lord Frederick was highly alarmed, but it seems that their intentions were peaceful, and that they only wished to see at close quarters what manner of men they were who could play against twenty-two. Altogether it was an unfortunate game for his lordship, for during it he had occasion to reprove one of the professionals, Shearman, for slackness in the field. The latter lost his temper, and when the chance came returned the ball so violently at him that it dislocated a finger, which, neglected, came near to setting up lockjaw and cutting short by ten years more of play that wonderful career.

Moreover, Lord Frederick's side lost by 30 runs, and with the

result went no small sum in bets. But of the why and the wherefore and of all that seamy side of the game which it illustrates, something will be said anon.

In the score-sheet of the match there occur three famous names, hitherto unmentioned in this review—Budd, Osbaldeston and William Clarke. The latter, as originator of the famous All-England Eleven, was one of the greatest pioneers in the development of the game; but though his bowling was essentially of the old school, he belongs more properly to the next great epoch, and shall be dealt with accordingly. E. H. Budd and G. Osbaldeston, however, were, with the famous Wykehamist, William Ward, the only amateur players who at this time could be mentioned in the same breath with Lord Frederick. The *locus classicus* for these two wonderful all-round sportsmen is a charmingly discursive and anecdotal book called *Sportascrapiana*, published in 1868 by a gentleman of very much their own kidney, C. A. Wheeler. Budd made his first appearance on Lord's ground in June 1802, and his last for the M.C.C. against Marlborough College at Marlborough exactly fifty years later. For fifty years he took out a shooting licence, and for half that time was a match for any man in England at running (he would run a hundred in "ten and a beat"), jumping, boxing, cricket, tennis, and billiards.

As a cricketer he was, until he left London in 1825, the most dashing player of his day. Pycroft, writing in 1868, compared him with E. M. Grace. He used a 3-lb. bat—nothing out of the way then, and Ward's was 1 lb. heavier still—and his favourite stroke was the quick-footed drive. He once hit a ball clean out of Lord's (first) ground, a feat against which Lord had staked 20 guineas; but on his claiming the money with the intention of dividing it amongst the players, "Lord was shabby and would not pay." He was a magnificent field, generally at middle wicket, and in this very match at Nottingham he actually caught out *nine* men. As he was, in addition, an admirable bowler, brisk in pace, and with an action that in those days was considered high, it is no wonder that he was one of the first single-wicket players of the time. In speaking of single wicket, it must be remembered that no run could be scored for any stroke from which the ball passed behind "the bounds" set 22 yards outwards from the off and leg stumps; obviously, therefore, these conditions favoured the fast bowlers and the hard-hitting batsmen. In 1820 Mr. Budd was protagonist in one of the most hollow victories in cricket records. At the Marylebone anniversary dinner, William Ward, no mean judge of the game, had accepted his challenge to play any man in England at single wicket and without fieldsmen for fifty guineas, play or pay. On reaching Lord's on the appointed day, Mr. Budd fell in with a cricket acquaintance, a certain Mr. Brand, a Sussex fast

bowler. "Why, Brand," said he, "are you up to see the match?" "No, to play it," answered his friend. But a sorry match it proved. Mr. Budd went in first and made 70—in spite of some severe blows on the nankeen breeches and silk stockings he wore; then, fearing lest his bruises might incapacitate him next day, he knocked down his wicket, bowled his opponent for 0, raised his score to 100, and then completed the other's spectacles.

But much more famous was a single-wicket match in which Osbaldeston played, though anything but a leading part. In 1810 Lord Frederick matched himself with T. C. Howard, one of the best of the professional fast bowlers, to play Osbaldeston and the great Surrey player, William Lambert. On the morning of the match "The Squire" was ill, and Budd went to Beaucherk asking him to postpone the match; but his lordship, true, we fear, to his standards, was no sportsman, and said, "No; play or pay." Back went Budd with the mortifying answer, but Lambert was encouraging and reckoned them "anything but safe" from a beating from his own unaided efforts. Osbaldeston tottered to the wicket, made one run, and then retired, thus securing a substitute to field, and then Lambert, with scores of 56 and 24, and 3 wickets clean bowled and a catch and bowl, beat the famous opposition by 15 runs. For once Greek met Greek, for when Lord Frederick went in in the critical fourth innings, Lambert bowled wides to him on purpose "to put him out of temper," there being in those days no penalty attendant. The bait took, his lordship lost his temper, and with it his wicket, and Lambert carried off the stakes, to say nothing of a mysterious parcel from Osbaldeston's mother, who was watching the match from her carriage.

George Osbaldeston, or "The Squire" as he was called throughout sporting England, was the figure of a century. As a cricketer he was in the Eton and Oxford elevens, and a very fast bowler and hard-hitting batsman. In 1816 he made 112 and 68 for M.C.C. v. Middlesex at Lord's, and for some years he was second only to Budd as a single-wicket player. At last, however, in 1818, he was matched with George Brown of Brighton—a bowler so fast that he once bowled a ball through a coat held by an amateur long-stop and killed a dog on the farther side. "The Squire" was soundly beaten, and in a fit of temper took a pen and erased his name from the members' list at Lord's. Subsequently he repented, and efforts were made to get him reinstated, but Lord Frederick was adamant, and, jealous perhaps of a younger rival, held out against all appeals. But fine cricketer though he was, Osbaldeston's laurels were culled mainly from other fields. For thirty-five seasons he was master of various packs, and until his nerve was impaired by a shooting accident, there was no more fearless man to hounds or over timber. As a game shot he was never surpassed, and once

brought down 98 partridges out of 100 cartridges. No wonder that he, alone in the world, was barred by the renowned Captain Horatio Ross in an open challenge to "walk and shoot."

For half a century Budd and Osbaldeston were the closest friends, constantly meeting in connection with every form of sport. On hearing of "The Squire's" death in 1866, Budd, then an old man of over eighty, was deeply affected, and summed up his friend's life in the words, "A noble fellow; always straight." Can we doubt but that, had Fate seen fit to reverse their destinies, the one would have passed upon the other a verdict no less generous?

Last of the great gentlemen players of the period comes William Ward. Parliamentary representative for the City of London, Director of the Bank of England, and an unrivalled hand at picquet, his abiding fame rests mainly on two accounts. In 1825 Lord seems to have become anxious as to his financial position, and began at last to play with the idea of turning the ground into a building estate. Ward recognized the danger in a flash, went to Lord and asked him his price for the lease. "Five thousand," was the reply. Ward drew his cheque-book from his pocket, Lord passed into honourable retirement, and "Lord's" was saved from an unimaginable fate.

To this same Ward's credit stood, until Holmes beat it last season, the record for the highest score ever made at headquarters, 278—on July 24, 1820, for M.C.C. v. Norfolk—a wonderful record to stand for over a century. What matter that "he was missed, the easiest possible chance, when he had scored 30"?

Ward played with a 4-lb. bat, and, as might therefore be conjectured, was a most powerful driver. Even the advent of the new bowling at the meridian of his career hardly checked his prolific scoring. Like Lord Frederick before him, and the Champion later, he never "bagged a brace" in a first-class match.

And of all who frequent the ground named after Lord,  
On the list first and foremost should stand Mr. Ward.  
No man will deny, I am sure, when I say  
That he's without rival first bat of the day.  
And although he has grown a little too stout,  
Even Mathews is bothered at bowling him out.  
He's our lifeblood and soul in this noblest of games,  
And yet on our praises he's many more claims.  
No pride, although rich, condescending and free,  
And a well-informed man, and a City M.P.

The historical content of the Nottingham match is not exhausted in the gallery of famous cricketers who played—or might have played—on that occasion; for this match was "sold," and sold not by one side or the other, but by men playing for both, only, as the historian remarks, with a satisfaction with which we may sympathize, the Nottingham men were not so well served, for they did not succeed in losing the match.



The truth is that money was still playing far too large a part in the conduct of the game ; it was not so much that the large stakes, for which many games were still played, constituted a temptation for the unscrupulous match-maker, but the fact that cricket in the early nineteenth century had been added to the field over which the activities of the bookmaker ranged. Side-bets, often of very great sums, were the rule rather than the exception, and the morality of the game was being undermined by the influence of "sportsmen" who neither understood nor cared for its science ; in fact, the prototype of the gentlemen of to-day whose understanding of the Sport of Kings is bounded by their familiarity with the "3.30 Special."

Just in front of the pavilion at Lord's at every great match sat men ready, with money down, to give and take the current odds upon the play. Many well-known bookmakers were to be found regularly amongst them, and even the famous Crockford and Gully occasionally appeared there. William Beldham has related how Gully would often take him aside and discuss the theory of the game with him, but that, being nothing of a player himself, he never became anything of a judge. These Marylebone "legs," unfortunately, were not content with straightforward business, but resorted to every sort of trick to make their money safe. The same old player told Pycroft how they would go down into Hampshire quite early in the season to "buy us up" ; but it was at the great cricketers' hostel of the "Green Man and Still" in Oxford Street that their chief business was done. Here all the leading professionals would come to lodge for the big London matches. The best of wine and beef was their normal fare, living such as five guineas for a win and three guineas for a loss could never pay for, and many a young countryman fresh to, and dazzled by, the glamour of London life, must have fallen an easy victim to the free drinks and the wiles of the "legs." The latter's task was rendered the easier by the comparatively small number of first-class players at this time. The dishonesty of the one or two outstanding men in a match would readily determine its issue. The favourite argument of the "legs" to the professional, apart, of course, from the obvious one addressed to his purse, was that the gentlemen themselves who made the matches also sold them, but that this was the case Beldham for one stoutly denies. The same authority says that he always met the advances made to him with the same retort, that the man who was bought was a fool, for he would never be bought twice ; his honour was in another's keeping, and for the future it was blackmail and not the guineas that piped the tune to which he danced.

Of course it was the single-wicket matches that offered most scope for such dark doings, and it is small wonder that there was

once a saying that a man who bet over single wicket was a fool. There is a delightful story at one such match which was a "double cross," and at the critical moment there was the bowler refusing to bowl within the batsman's reach (wides, of course, not then counting), and the batsman vigorously refusing to make any stroke at the ball for fear he might happen to score a run and so lose his money.

Ultimately, of course, the rogues overreached themselves. In one of the Surrey *v.* All England games of the period, Surrey were represented by a very fine side, and thought to have the match in their pocket. Much to Beldham's surprise, however, he found that the "legs" were laying seven to four against them; but "this time they were done, for they backed in the belief that some Surrey men had sold the match; but Surrey then played to win."

The climax came when two of the worst offenders fell into a quarrel at Lord's. Their unguarded recriminations were wafted through the open pavilion windows, and Lord Frederick immediately hauled them before the Committee; they were both in a towering rage, and, being powerful men, were ordered to stand on opposite sides of the table, from which they proceeded to hurl accusations at each other as to the bribes each had received. With the taunts falling in so accurately with the painful recollections of many present as to matches lost and won against all reasonable expectation, the Committee had no choice left open to them. The guilty pair were warned off Lord's for ever, and one of the greatest cricketers of all time then passed ingloriously out of the game.

But other causes gradually began to operate against these dark practices; the number of good players was steadily on the increase, and where it had once been enough to buy but one or two in order to make sure of a result, it was now necessary to square perhaps half a side. Then, again, the custom of playing the big matches for heavy stakes was dying out, and in the sixties Pycroft could write that not for thirty years at least could any player be named who was believed to have taken money to play to lose. About that time an attempt was made to revive the champion single-wicket matches for large stakes, but it met with no support and not a little outspoken criticism from the old cricketers who had seen something of the evils to which it might again lead, and from that day to this cricket has remained a synonym for straight dealing and good sportsmanship.

It must, however, be admitted that the earlier generations of cricketers were sometimes not above minor sharp practices to attain their ends: *alia tempora, alii mores*; but it is a shock to read the last few pages of John Nyren's book in which he offers sundry hints as to the "management of a match." "In a desperate state of the game," he says, "every manœuvre must be tried," and

advocates that when two opponents are well set, "any device or excuse is legitimate that may delay the game and the strikers thus become cold and inactive."

Even in the enlightened days of the All-England Eleven sharp practice was not unknown. Once Tom Lockyer, when wicket-keeping, and with ball in hand, suggested to an unsuspecting local batsman that he should remove a piece of mud from the pitch; no sooner did the latter leave his crease to do so than Lockyer whipped off the bails and appealed for a stump, and when remonstrated with, merely replied, that "one could not be too particular when playing twenty-two"!

## CHAPTER VI

### THE ROUND-ARM REVOLUTION: WILLIAM LILLYWHITE

THE opening years of the nineteenth century had seen the ascendancy originally enjoyed by Kent, and subsequently by Hampshire, transferred from those counties into the hands of Surrey. In 1795 the latter played All England, and from then until 1807 they were a match, or more than a match, for any other possible combination.

By this time the old type of fast under-hand bowling on the David Harris model had largely given place to the new school of high lobbing under-hand. But the "old players" were growing old indeed, and there was arising a new school of batsmen who, following the aggressive tactics of Beldham and Fennex, began to employ the hitherto unknown method of "running down" the high-tossed lob, or, as it was then called, "giving her the rush." One of the earliest of this school was John Hammond, a very quick-footed left-hand hitter, who once hit a ball so hard and so straight at Lord Frederick Beauclerk's head that his lordship narrowly escaped with his life, and had never the same nerve in bowling afterwards. The result of this new departure was to upset the equilibrium of bat and ball in favour of the former, and batting averages began steadily to increase, while gloomy reflections were made upon the length of time now necessary to arrive at a definite result when the best players were engaged. But then, as ever, the inventive genius of the cricketer proved itself capable of grappling with a situation that seemed to threaten the future prosperity of the game.

Upon the great revolution from under-hand to round-arm bowling a mass of evidence is to be found in cricket literature, and I can here do no more than mention quite briefly the chief facts and figures connected with it. We have seen that about 1788 Tom Walker, of the Hambledon Club, had made an attempt to introduce the new "throwing" style; whether he really threw or merely raised his hand to about the height of the shoulder cannot now be determined. Anyway, he was warned off by the legislators

of the Club. But the seed he had sown lay sleeping in the ground, and sprang to life again some twenty years later.

Cricket tradition has unanimously ascribed to John Willes of Sutton Valence, near Maidstone, the credit for being the real originator in round-arm bowling. Curiously enough, this gentleman's first recorded big match was also the first meeting of the Gentlemen with the Players—on July 7, 8, and 9, 1806, and Tom Walker was still playing for the latter, though now, we imagine, more or less solely as a batsman. There is no evidence as to whether Willes attempted the new style in this game; at any rate, he only bowled one wicket. But a year later, on Penenden Heath, playing for Twenty-three of Kent (*sic transit!*) v. Thirteen of England, he definitely took the plunge, as is recorded by the *Morning Herald* in the following terms: "The straight-armed bowling, introduced by John Willes, Esq., was generally practised in this game, and proved a great obstacle against getting runs in comparison to what might have been got by straightforward bowling." This bowling met with great opposition. Willes and his bowling were frequently barred in making a match, and he played sometimes amid much uproar and confusion. "Still, he would persevere, till the ring closed on the players, the stumps were lawlessly pulled up, and all came to a standstill."

Persevere he did for fifteen years, and others, notably William Ashby, who practised the art with him at Sutton Valence, followed intermittently his example. Budd says that about 1818 he and Lambert of Surrey also attained to a sort of round-arm delivery which met with great success, only to have it denounced by Mr. Ward at Lord's because he couldn't play it! In 1822 the end of Willes's missionary attempt came. On July 15th he opened the bowling for Kent against the M.C.C. at Lord's, but was promptly no-balled by Noah Mann, son of the old Hambledon Noah, and godson of Sir Horace; Willes threw down the ball in disgust, jumped on his horse, and rode away out of Lord's and out of cricket history.

But the mantle that he thus indignantly discarded was destined to fall on broader and more famous shoulders. William Lillywhite, the "Nonpareil" bowler, was born near Goodwood in June 1792. He is buried in Highgate Cemetery, and over his grave stands a monument erected by the noblemen and gentlemen of the Marylebone Club, testifying alike to the esteem in which he was held and the world-wide reputation which, from a humble station, he achieved. His first recorded match was in 1822, and in the next five years he and his collaborator in the new style of bowling, James Broadbridge, raised their county to such eminence that in 1827 they were matched to play All England.

In the three "Experimental Matches" that resulted, the

county won the first two at Sheffield and Lord's by 7 and 3 wickets respectively, and the professionals on the England side (with, curiously enough, William Ashby amongst them!) signed a manifesto refusing to play the third "unless the Sussex players bowl fair, i.e. abstain from throwing." Fortunately, a way was found round the impasse: the England side was reorganized with a view to increasing its batting strength, and after a desperate game (on which there is some very picturesque evidence in *The Cricket Field*) Sussex was defeated by 24 runs, a result due in some considerable degree to the fact that a certain Mr. G. T. Knight, playing for All England, met the enemy with their own weapons by "adopting the new liberal system, as it is here called, with much effect."

The year 1828 saw a determined and sustained effort made by the new school to obtain "G.H.Q. sanction" for their innovation. The chief battle was fought out in the columns of the *Sporting Magazine*. Mr. Knight proved an exceedingly able advocate for his side, and Mr. Denison put up a stout defence for the existing order. The chief letters of the correspondence are reproduced verbatim in the latter gentleman's *Sketches of the Players*, an interesting and now really scarce book which he first published in 1846.

The heads of the arguments adduced may briefly be given as follows :—

By Mr. G. T. Knight :—

1. It is universally admitted that batting dominates bowling to an extent detrimental to the game.

2. The new style is not really new at all: the Kent bowlers (i.e. John Willes and Ashby) practised it twenty years earlier, and it was only because they raised the arm too high that the M.C.C. went too far in the opposite direction and condemned all scientific progress by demanding that the hand should be kept below the elbow.

3. There has been no attempt to regulate the new style reasonably by law.

4. The proposal to redress the balance of the game by increasing the size of the wicket is retrograde; it would reduce and not stimulate the science of the game.

5. To describe the new style as "throwing" is nonsense; the straight arm is the very antithesis of a throw; moreover, it makes it impossible to bowl fast and dangerously.

6. Let us keep to a middle course, avoiding the tameness of the old or chuck-halfpenny school and the extravagances of the new alike.

Mr. Denison replies :—

1. The new style is fatal to all scientific play, putting a premium on chance hits, and placing scientific defence at a discount.

2. It is throwing, pure and simple.

3. It must lead to a dangerous pace, such as cannot be faced on hard grounds, save at the most imminent peril.

In his general attitude he had the unqualified support of Mr. William Ward, old Thomas Lord, then, as ever, a die-hard, and John Nyren, who in the first edition of his famous book, published in

1833, prophecies that "the elegant and scientific game of cricket will degenerate into a mere exhibition of rough, coarse, horse-play!"

At a meeting of the M.C.C. in May 1828 the members, after a long discussion, and following apparently the principle of *medio tutissimus ibis*, so modified Rule 10 as to admit of the hand being raised as high as the elbow, the back of it now being allowed to be uppermost, and the arm to be extended horizontally. But this amendment was so slight in effect that it did nothing to redress the balance between bat and ball, with the result that the two protagonists, Lillywhite and Broadbridge, continued, with the tacit approval of umpires, to raise their hands to the height of their shoulder. Their example was promptly followed by all and sundry, and at last, in 1835, the M.C.C. gave way, and altered the law to read as follows :—

The Ball must be bowled, and if it be thrown or jerked, or if the hand be above the shoulder in the delivery, the umpire must call "No Ball."

Even then the trouble was not settled, for in the next ten years bowlers continued to try to steal a march on the law by raising their hands even higher yet, and when this went hand-in-hand with the new fashion for express bowling set by Alfred Mynn, the situation again became so threatening that in 1845 the M.C.C. were once more forced so to modify Law 10 that in future the bowler should never have the benefit of the doubt. And so things stood for another seventeen years, when the last—but this time short and dramatic—revolution was to win for the bowler full liberty to bowl.

Meanwhile actual events were to falsify in a surprising way the two main prophecies, made at the time of controversy, the one in support of, the other in opposition to, the revolution of 1828. Mr. Knight had confidently maintained that the new round-arm action could be kept under complete control by legislation, and that, in any case, it was impossible to bowl really fast with the straight arm; his opponents had prophesied that the new bowling would be physically dangerous, and that it would kill all scientific batting. What, as a matter of fact, happened was that the bowlers consistently defied the limitations imposed upon them by law, that they rapidly attained, under the new style, to great pace and abruptness of rise, and finally that, so far from scientific batting being killed as a result, it developed to a remarkable extent, and the whole game made a great advance towards the standards which we recognize as determining first-class play to-day.

Before we examine the course of this development a more than passing reference must be made to its protagonist, William Lillywhite. The great Sussex bowler was a little man, no more than 5 feet 4 inches in height, but from all we read of him, he must have

made up in dignity and personality for what he lacked in inches. He always played in a tall hat and broad cotton braces, with a rather high Gladstone collar and a deep black tie. Born near Goodwood in 1792, he was thirty-five years old before he made history in the "Experimental Matches," and fifty-two before he left Brighton to take a permanent place on the ground staff at Lord's. Here he remained until the year of his death, 1854, and in the preceding summer was accorded a benefit by the Marylebone Club, in which, despite his sixty-one years, he bowled excellently. He was also the first professional coach ever engaged at Winchester College, where he devoted himself especially to the bowling and wicket-keeping of the side, and so turned the tide once more in Winchester's favour against their school rivals.

Like nearly all the early round-arm bowlers, Lillywhite bowled round the wicket. His pace was slow medium, with a pronounced bias from the leg, and there has never been a straighter bowler. But it was his accuracy of length, combined with his generalship, that more than anything else earned for him the title of "the Nonpareil." "I suppose," he once said, "that if I was to think *every* ball, they would never get a run!" He used to have tremendous duels with the two great Kent batsmen, Fuller Pilch and Felix. Pilch, of whom I shall have more to say anon, was a great master of forward play, and old Lilly would keep varying his length and flight, hoping to catch him in two minds with his bat hung out to dry. "Sometimes he would a little overdo it," said Felix to Pycroft, "and Pilch, ever on the alert, would take a stride and hit him clean away, whereupon he would say to me at the other wicket, 'There now, I shan't try that no more, Master Felix.' To suggest to him that Pilch was his master was to make sure of a 'rise.'" "I wish I had as many pounds as I have bowled Pilch," the old man would snap back. For the younger generation of bowlers he had unmeasured contempt, chiefly on the score of their shortness of pitch and erratic direction. "These bowlers might run people out, or stump them out, or catch them out, but they can't bowl to bowl anyone out; that bowling isn't mediocrity!"

When the catapult was first introduced at Cambridge, Lillywhite, so Pycroft relates, undertook to beat it in hitting an undefended wicket, and he actually did hit down the stumps more frequently than did the catapult. His enthusiasm for bowling was such that he would sometimes hardly give his long-stop time to get into his proper place, and lengthening age seemed powerless to diminish either zeal or skill. In 1847, at the age of fifty-five, he bowled unchanged in the Gentlemen *v.* Players match, and his average bag of wickets per year was well over 200, for certainly a low single figure apiece. Small wonder, then, that that great enthusiast and charming cricket writer, Fred Gale, should have risen in his



wrath against the attitude of airy superiority assumed by his young friends of the seventies towards this earlier generation, and have told them plainly that, were Lillywhite and Redgate, Mynn and Hillyer, suddenly to re-enter the field in the plenitude of their powers, there would soon be one of those "h'accidents" that the first-named so often prophesied for the batsman when he took the ball to bowl.

Of the other protagonist in the round-arm revolutions—or at least in its climax, the "Experimental Matches"—much less has been recorded in cricket history. But James Broadbridge deserves his measure of immortality, not merely as Lillywhite's *vis-à-vis*, but as certainly one of the greatest all-round players of his age. "Our Jem was one of the most fox-headed fellows that ever bowled, and was enough to worry and puzzle any man alive." In pace rather faster than his confederate, he was very accurate and full of resource; the two together must have been a terror to their opponents in the days when batsmen were not yet accustomed to the new style. In 1829, as given men, they bowled unchanged for the Gentlemen, and beat the Players by 193 runs, though only a year before the latter had defeated Seventeen Gentlemen by an innings.

Broadbridge was also a very fine, hard-hitting batsman, and many long scores stand to his name; but he was something of a dasher, as is shown by the one dramatic incident recorded of his batting. In the last and most sensational of the experimental matches, England, by dour batting, had made good their early failure, and set Sussex 120 to win in the fourth innings. Captain Cheslyn, the patron and backer of the Sussex men, urged them to be steady, but almost at the start James Broadbridge "threw his bat clean out of his hand at a wide ball, which mounted in the air and was caught by Ward at point." After much dispute, the umpire gave it out, and eventually England won by 25 runs.

Perhaps it was better so. A third defeat might have steeled the hearts of the reactionaries unequivocally against the reform, which their success made appear less dangerous. Who knows but that here, too, James Broadbridge may have shown himself a "fox-headed cricketer"?

## CHAPTER VII

### THE BEGINNINGS OF AMATEUR CRICKET

**I**F William Goldwin, the poet of our second chapter, did not himself play cricket at Eton, he must at least have been familiar with it there. For cricket, as we have seen, was originally a boys' game, and from Tudor times at least provided, no doubt, the favourite summer pastime at every boys' school. If Robert Mathew can, in his Latin poem of 1647, describe the Wykehamists as playing cricket on "Hills," and if Bishop Ken, his contemporary, can be described as at this time "attempting to wield a cricket bat," we may presume that Henry VI's scholars were doing the same. The Duke of Marlborough was at St. Paul's School a few years later, and if the evidence of "The Devil and the Peers" is accepted, seems to have played the game there.

By the first quarter of the eighteenth century at Eton, Horace Walpole is sneering at cricket, and Bedford and Sandwich are devoted to it. In 1751 the Old Etonians are playing the Gentlemen of England. Seven years later Charles James Fox entered the school a cricket enthusiast already, and in 1788 the "Gentlemen educated at Eton" met the "Rest of the Schools" at Lord's, and the Cambridge Old Etonians had for thirty years past been more than a match for the rest of the University.

Eton's first serious school rivals seem to have been Westminster, who played in Tothill Fields, where Vincent Square now lies. There must have been a keen and early cult of the game at the school, for the third Duke of Dorset, Pawlett and Dehaney, all members of the "Star and Garter Committee," were all educated there. In 1792 we read of the young cricketers of Westminster habitually "breaking windows" on their way down to their ground, until one householder actually fired his blunderbuss over their heads, and the trouble had to be taken to court. Four years earlier they had encountered Eton, and in 1796 met and beat them by 66 runs on Hounslow Heath. The match had been strictly prohibited by the Eton authorities, and on their return every member of the defeated eleven was soundly flogged by the headmaster!

Cricket at Harrow seems to have been of rather later growth than on the plain. In his book *Eton and Harrow at the Wicket*, a mine of information upon which I have throughout drawn heavily,

Mr. Ashley-Cooper temerarily suggests that it was actually introduced there by an old Etonian headmaster, perhaps by Dr. Thackeray, great-grandfather of the novelist. Be this as it may, the game was certainly being played there by the end of the eighteenth century, though few Harrovians left any mark upon the game before the era of the great schools' match.

Though there is evidence that the two schools had met several times before, and a manuscript note in the reminiscences of one Harrovian includes the entry, "1804 We beat the Etonians," the match of 1805 is generally regarded as the first of the series. Byron played for Harrow and saw his side "most confoundingly beat," but found consolation in an extremely convivial evening, "seven of us in a single hackney, 4 Eton and 3 Harrow." After the match the Etonians were rash enough to taunt their defeated enemy as follows :—

Adventurous boys of Harrow School,  
Of cricket you've no knowledge.  
You play not cricket, but the fool  
With men of Eton College.

But they had reckoned without the poet, who retorted somewhat effectively :—

Ye Eton wits, to play the fool  
Is not the boast of Harrow School.  
No wonder then at our defeat  
Folly like yours could ne'er be beat.

Between 1805 and 1818 there is no record of any match between the two schools, but in the latter year they met twice, once in the middle of the Easter (!), once at the beginning of the summer holidays, Harrow winning both times, and from 1822 the match has been played at Lord's without a break except for the years 1829–1831, 1856, and the period of the war.

In the Harrow Eleven of 1821 there appeared, when not fifteen years of age, Charles Wordsworth, a nephew of the poet's. Arrangements had been made that year between the two school captains to play a match at Eton, but at the eleventh hour Dr. Keate, the famous "flogging headmaster," forbade the game. He should have known better, for he had himself been in the Eton Eleven thirty years earlier. The next year, therefore, the schools met at Lord's at the beginning of the holidays, and in a volume of reminiscences, published in later life when Bishop of St. Andrews, Wordsworth records with pride the success of his left-hand bowling, and the interest taken in his account of the match by George Canning, then Viceroy designate of India, but thirty-five years earlier an enthusiast for the game at Eton. Wordsworth's eight wickets caused the Etonians to try to find a professional bowler of the same style against whom they might practise, and in 1823 the Harrovians

did "have a man down from Lord's," whose expenses were paid by a brother-in-law of Cardinal Manning's.

Manning himself, a lifelong friend of the bishop's, played in the Harrow Eleven of 1825, and so in the first Harrow and Winchester match. Rugby, Charterhouse, and Winchester had all in turn challenged the Harrovians, and in 1824 the Wykehamists were to have visited Harrow; but Dr. Butler, following Keate's example, vetoed the proposal, and it was at Lord's in the next year that the schools first met. Winchester won very easily, and encouraged by their success, challenged Eton in the following summer, and defeated them by 53 runs.

The first thirty years of the century saw many well-known cricketers appearing for the first time at Lord's in these matches, but as we shall have occasion to pay tribute to most of them later on, we need here only recall the names of the two elder Grimstons and Charles Harenc of Harrow, J. H. Kirwan, the Eton fast bowler, who in 1835 actually clean bowled twenty-six men in the two school games, and W. Meyrick of Winchester, whose century against Harrow and heavy scoring against Eton in 1826 was by far the most notable feat of batting performed in any of the games until Emilius Bayley's 152 in 1841.

Charles Wordsworth and Herbert Jenner first met in the Eton and Harrow match of 1822. Five years later they met again in the first of all University matches, and when after fifty years more the jubilee of that great event was celebrated, each was still hale and hearty, and their names were celebrated in the well-known lines :—

Fifty years have sped since first,  
Keen to win their laurel,  
Oxford, round a Wordsworth clustered,  
Cambridge, under Jenner mustered,  
Met in friendly quarrel.

In the sixth edition of the Badminton volume on cricket, Wordsworth has contributed a most interesting account of the first University match. The fact that his father was at this time Master of Trinity, Cambridge, gave him special facilities for approaching the task, but it was difficult to get away in term time, and in applying for leave to the Dean the Oxford captain had recourse to the now threadbare excuse of the dentist, a piece of Jesuitry countenanced, if not actually suggested, by his tutor Longley, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. The match was ruined by rain, but Oxford completely outplayed their rivals on the first day. The two captains dominated the game, Jenner scoring 47 out of his side's total of 92, and Wordsworth, with his left-hand off-breaks, lowering seven Light Blue wickets for 25 runs.

Two years later saw the Universities meet at Oxford and the home side easily victorious. On this occasion Wordsworth unfortunately "bagged a brace," but he was in no sort of practice, having rowed the previous day in the first of all University boat-races (of which again he was *fons et origo*), and suffering from the effects in such a way as made it impossible for him to hold a bat ! In the next decade Oxford and Cambridge only met three times, and the Dark Blues preserved their unbeaten record.

Of all University players of this period Herbert Jenner stands supreme.

Free from all affectation young Jenner stands forth,  
And all who are judges acknowledge his worth ;  
Wicket-keeper and bowler and batsman, in all  
He is good, but perhaps he shines most with the ball.

Such was the contemporary verdict, dictated we suspect by the exigencies of rhyme, for Jenner was the first, and surely one of the finest, of amateur wicket-keepers, and the way he would "take" the bowling of Alfred Mynn, without pads or gloves, was one of the sights of the cricket field.

The most famous of all "domestic" matches, Gentlemen *v.* Players, was inaugurated on Lord's first ground in 1806, when the Gentlemen, "with Lambert and Beldham," won by an innings, and a fortnight later, dispensing with Beldham, again got home by 82 runs. For their second victory they were mainly indebted to Lord Frederick Beauclerk, who batted splendidly. The sides did not again meet until 1819—why we do not know—but when the amateurs then tried to give battle on equal terms they found themselves outplayed. They did indeed win in 1822, thanks to some fine hitting by E. H. Budd, but twenty years had then to pass before they again beat the Players, except with odds. In the interval they tried to make a match of it, sometimes by playing as many as seventeen on their own side, sometimes by borrowing the crack professionals. The climax, however, was reached in 1837, when in "The Barn-Door Match" or "Ward's Folly" they defended wickets of the normal size against the Players' stumps of 36 inches by 12 inches : even so they were defeated by an innings !

So little interest was taken in the match that some of the Gentlemen selected would often just fail to turn up, their places having to be filled by anyone available on the ground ; and in 1841 the game had fallen into such disrepute that the M.C.C. refused to organize it any longer, and only the efforts of the Hon. F. Ponsonby and C. G. Taylor, who opened a subscription list for the purpose, averted its collapse. But in the very next year the tide turned.

From his first appearance in the match, in 1832, Alfred Mynn was, of course, by far the greatest power on the amateur side, but

he had for some time little support. Apart from him, only Ward and Budd did anything remarkable with the bat. Lord Frederick and G. T. Knight had some success with the ball, though the latter in 1827 was constantly "no-balled" for "throwing," but the most sensational success fell to a schoolboy.

A. J., or "Dandy" Lowth entered Eton at the age of twelve, but in 1828 stood for and was elected to a scholarship at Winchester! There he was three years in the Eleven, getting into the side primarily as a batsman, but in his two last years securing 33 wickets against Eton and Harrow. He subsequently played three years for Oxford, and captured 24 Cambridge wickets. So good was his bowling in his last year at Winchester that a deputation from the M.C.C. came down especially to watch him, and as a result invited him to play for the Gentlemen (Eighteen) against the Players. In the match, which the Gentlemen won by 35 runs, 9 wickets fell to his bowling, two more than rewarded the redoubtable Alfred Mynn. It is interesting also to notice that in the same match two other members of the contemporary Winchester Eleven also participated, N. Darnell and the Hon. W. L. Packenham—a high compliment to the school or a grave reflection on the standard of amateur cricket! Lowth was a "pocket Hercules." Standing but 5 feet 4 inches high, he bowled left-hand fast medium with a beautiful action and a quick break.

Of the success of the professional bowlers against the Gentlemen's feeble opposition it is needless to speak, but something must be said of two great batsmen whose greatest achievements are connected with the match.

To Thomas Beagley of Hampshire belongs the distinction of having made the first hundred in the series—113 not out in the Coronation Match of 1821. The last of all the celebrated old Hampshire players, he appeared in representative matches from 1816 to 1836, when he played in the first North and South match against the redoubtable Redgate, and proved that the "old school" could still hold its own against the fastest of the new bowling. To his skill and to the sadness of his end Pycroft has borne witness in a passage so typical and so touching that I cannot resist quotation: "Yes, we have a painful recollection of poor Thomas Beagley—one of the finest batsmen of Lord Frederick's day, and the very model for a long-stop—sitting neglected and alone under the lime-trees at Lord's, while the ground was resounding with just such cheers for others, in his day yet unborn, that once had been raised for him. At length a benefit was attempted in acknowledgment of his former services; but the weather rendered it of little worth to him, and time after time we saw him looking more threadbare and more pitiful, till at last a notice in 'Bell' told us what Thomas Beagley had been, and what—alas!—he was.

“ ‘Do you see that old man sitting there ? ’ we once said to one of the first of the amateurs. ‘That man is Thomas Beagley.’

“ ‘Thomas *who* ? ’ was the reply.

“ ‘There was a day when men would as soon have asked, ‘Who is W. G. Grace ? ’ or ‘Who is Daft ? ’ ’ ”

No less sad and tragically early was the death of James Saunders, the best of all off-side players between Beldham and Pilch. In 1825 he scored 99 run out for the Players, and two years later, in the same match, 100. He was a brilliant left-hand hitter, and only his death from consumption at the early age of twenty-nine prevented him from becoming one of the greatest figures of the game.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE GREAT KENT ELEVEN: ALFRED MYNN AND FULLER PILCH

WE have already seen how Lillywhite and Broadbridge, the protagonists of the round-arm revolution in bowling, ultimately won for their new style the official countenance of the M.C.C. For some years they dominated the batting, but gradually, as always happens, the batsmen found new methods of defence and even attack against them, and equilibrium was restored. Then there happened what "the die-hards" had gloomily foretold: a new generation arose who found it possible to bowl round-arm at a pace undreamt of by its originators, and discounted as utterly impossible in Mr. Knight's polemics.

The first and for long the greatest of this new school were the Nottingham professional, Sam Redgate, and the Kent amateur, Alfred Mynn. Pycroft described Redgate as for two years the finest bowler within his memory: he combined perfect fairness of delivery with great pace and spin, and he had a devastating ball which he held back in the air. In 1835, in his first appearance at Lord's as a given man for the Gentlemen, he clean bowled the redoubtable Fuller Pilch for 0 in both innings, a feat possibly unrivalled until Morfee's similar treatment of Mr. Warner some seventy-five years later. In 1839, playing for England against Kent at Town Malling, he delivered perhaps the most famous over in all "medieval" history: the first ball shaved Pilch's wicket, the second bowled him, the third bowled Alfred Mynn, and the fourth Shearman. Pycroft, in a little known brochure, regretfully recalls the legend that at each success the triumphant bowler drained a glass of brandy. Improbable though this may sound, it is unfortunately true that Redgate was his own worst enemy, and his career, brilliant as any man's in promise and first achievement, came to an untimely and a tragic close.

Of Alfred Mynn it may be said with truth that no cricketer, with the single exception of the Champion himself, captured so completely by prowess and personality alike the hearts of his own generation, or has been accorded so generous a meed of fame by every writer on the game that knew him. Like the Champion,



he was a national institution ; men flocked to see him wherever he played, and the Frenchman who was being initiated into the mysteries of a great match only voiced the sentiments of contemporary England when, at his first sight of that majestic figure as it entered the field of play, he exclaimed with conclusive satisfaction, " Voilà, le grand Mynn ! "

Born at Goudhurst, in Kent, in 1807, he came of a yeoman stock renowned for two generations for their vast stature and athletic ability. At an early age he migrated to Bearsted, and must have played many of his earliest matches on the famous green of that place. He is said to have been taught round-arm bowling by John Willea, and at first to have been very erratic. Soon, however, as he began to play in the best-class cricket, he steadied down, and while losing but little of his great pace, became deadly accurate in pitch and direction. Imagine a perfectly proportioned giant of some 6 feet 1 inch in height and a fighting weight of from 18 stone to 20 stone (when Daft knew him he put him down at 23 stone !) advancing to the wicket with a few deliberate and majestic strides, bringing his arm round in a swing as smooth as a piston-rod, and projecting the ball assuredly faster than any English bowler of to-day, a perfect length on the leg-stump, whipping across to hit the off ! I have not myself come across any reference to Mynn as a " swerver," but Mr. James Fort, himself a notable figure in Wykehamical cricket, has told me how he remembers hearing " Dandy " Lowth say, " I tell you, sir, I have seen the ball turn in the air from his hand."

If he had never made a run or caught a catch, Mynn would have fairly earned his titles of " The Lion of Kent " and " Alfred the Great," but he was a magnificent short slip—for his hands were the size of a leg of mutton—and he was the most dangerous hitter in all England. For twenty years he played for the Gentlemen, and definitely turned the tide that had for long seemed irrevocably set against their success.

We cannot enter here into the details of his great career, but something must be said about two of his most famous triumphs. The first of all the North *v.* South matches was played at Lord's in mid-season 1836, and the North had won. The return at Leicester, played for £500 a-side, excited the greatest possible interest, and a huge company, including all the great experts of the M.C.C., who made a special journey by coach, assembled to witness it. In a preliminary practice Alfred Mynn was badly hit on the leg—pads, be it remembered, being still a great rarity—but was doctored up, and, against the advice of his friends, persisted in taking the field. So injured was he that he could not bowl, but his batting, with a total of 146, and that undefeated, won the match. He was terribly punished by Redgate's fast bowling, and played throughout in the

utmost agony. At length he could stand it no longer, and, begging Lord Frederick Beauclerk to accompany him into one of the marquees, he there showed his leg to his lordship. Lord Frederick instantly sent for a fly, and, assisting Mr. Mynn into it, desired him to get home as quickly as possible. So serious and severe was the injury that Mr. Mynn was obliged to be packed up, as it were, and laid on the roof of the coach from Leicester to London. Back home in Kent, he was laid up for many months, and for a time the doctors despaired of saving the leg; but his stout heart and iron constitution at last prevailed, and in 1838 he returned once more to make good his title to the Championship of England.

His opponent in this contest was James Dearman of Sheffield, a brilliant batsman, but so small in comparison that he was dubbed David to Mynn's Goliath. Two matches were played—the first on Fuller Pilch's ground at Town Malling, the second at Sheffield, and Mynn won both with ridiculous ease. *Victrix causa deis placuit sed victa Catoni*, and Mr. Denison, in his *Sketches of the Players*, has borne convincing, if peculiar, testimony to the pluck of the Yorkshireman: "It is but justice to Dearman," he records, "to say that he delighted the spectators throughout by his unflinching bottom!"

Several portraits have been published of the great Alfred Mynn, and none is better than that in which he appears in the centre of the All-England Eleven of 1847, which in that year played a match against Kent especially to do him honour. Of his character as a man and a brother, of his never-failing good humour and generosity, of his unflinching uprightness and good sportsmanship, there is overwhelming testimony from all who knew, and many who played with, him. He died in 1861 at the early age of fifty-four, and the affection and pride in which he was held then received their most touching expression in words that must surely be regarded as a perfect epitaph for this greatest of Kent cricketers:—

With his tall and stately presence, with his nobly moulded form,  
His broad hand was ever open, his brave heart was ever warm.  
All were proud of him, all loved him. . . . As the changing seasons pass,  
As our champion lies a-sleeping underneath the Kentish grass,  
Proudly, sadly, we will name him—to forget him were a sin—  
Lightly lie the turf upon thee, kind and manly Alfred Mynn.

What Hants and Surrey had been, what Notts and Yorkshire were yet to be, that was Kent county in the thirties and forties of last century, and, taking into consideration the changed conditions and increased development of the game, one is still tempted to suggest that no finer county eleven has ever taken the field than that which represented Kent, and as often as not defeated All England, in the opening years of the Canterbury Festival.

There has never been a greater enthusiast for the game than

Fred Gale, the "Old Buffer," and his two books, *The Game of Cricket* and *Echoes from Old Cricket Fields*, contain some delightful writing on his favourite topic, this great Kent team.

Let us take him with us for our guide and go with him on his favourite pilgrimage to Fuller Pilch's hostel of the "Saracen's Head" at Canterbury, there to smoke a pipe with the old cricketer, and listen to his reminiscences of the players with whom he made history. And first a word or two about Fuller himself. He was a Norfolk man himself, and at an early age began to make a name for himself when playing with other members of his family for that county. His first appearance at Lord's was in the famous match in 1820 against the M.C.C., when William Ward made the record score of 278. Pilch's totals were but 0 and 2, but Ward, a very notable judge, was so impressed by his style that he prophesied great things of him.

From that date until his retirement in 1855 he was one of the leading batsmen in England, and for many years the consistency of his scoring was unrivalled. In 1832 he finds mention in the poem on the Crack Eleven of England, published in Pierce Egan's *Book of Sport* :—

Another "bold tailor," as fine a young man  
As e'er hit a ball and then afterwards ran,  
Is from Bury St. Edmund's, and Pilch they him call,  
In a few years 'tis said he'll be better than all.  
At present his batting's a little too wild,  
Though the Nonpareil hitter he's sometimes been styled :  
So free and so fine, with the hand of a master,  
Spectators all grieve when he meets with disaster.

Sure enough in the next years he fulfilled that prophecy by his two overwhelming defeats of Marsden, the great Sheffield batsman, who had made history in 1826 by scoring 227 against Notts at the age of only twenty-two. The first match at Norwich Pilch won by an innings and 70, the second at Sheffield, which excited immense interest and attracted 20,000 spectators, by 128 runs, his scores being 82 and 108 against the Yorkshireman's 27 and 35.

In 1835 he was induced for a salary of £100 a year to take up his residence in Kent, at Town Malling, where he became manager of a tavern and a ground attendant. In 1842 he made his final move to Canterbury, and for the next thirteen years was the life and soul of the famous eleven that made history there.

In style Fuller Pilch was a most forward player, and it was by his grand forward play and power of placing the ball through the fields on the off-side that he met and mastered the new school of fast round-arm bowlers.

Gale's description of his batting is really too good to omit : "They may call it Pilch's 'poke,' if they please, but I rather fancy that Pilch's 'poke' would puzzle some of our present-day bowlers.

If a 'poke' means smothering the ball before it has time to rise and break, and placing it to the off or on with the greatest apparent ease, I shall much like to see it done again in these days ; but from my recollections of Pilch . . . I hardly ever saw him let off an off-ball which was wide of the wicket, and he had a terrific hit between middle-off and cover, which gained him many a four or five runs."

At the other end to Pilch, more often than not, was another very great batsman, Nicholas Wanostrocht (or, as he always appeared in the score-sheets, Felix), schoolmaster, artist, musician, author of the famous *Felix on the Bat*, and inventor of the catapult bowling machine and of tubular batting gloves. For Felix's batting Pilch had the greatest admiration : "he knew the whole science of the game," he would say, "and had a hand and eye such as no one e'er beat him at ; and when he saw the ball was pretty well safe to keep outside the off-stump, it was a beautiful thing to see him throw his right foot forward—he was left-handed—and do a little bit of tip-toeing with his bat over his shoulder ; and if he did get the ball, and it missed the watcher, you heard her hit the palings on the off-side almost as soon as she left the bat." Pilch and Felix at the wicket must have been hard to beat as a spectacle, something akin to L. C. H. Palaret and H. T. Hewett in Somerset's palmiest days. Felix was never happy without his joke, and the favourite target for his wit was always old William Lillywhite, who, as regularly as clockwork, used year after year to open the bowling for All England against Kent in the first match of the Festival. "Good-morning, Mr. Lillywhite !" Felix would say as he reached the crease. "Halloa ! a cricket match on to-day, eh ? and you a-bowling ? Well, let's have an innings." And old Lilly would be a little bit cross sometimes, and answer him a little sharp : "You go and mind your batting, Muster Felix, and I will mind my bowling."

If the three cracks failed with the bat, there was always Ned Wenman, with solid back play and brilliant cutting, to set things right, or Tom Adams to play a dashing innings, or Alfred Mynn's brother, Walter, and Hillyer, "to bide, at need, till the clock struck seven, and never think about the notches." And the bowling was as good as the batting : very often Mynn and Hillyer would bowl through a match unchanged. The former could not bowl so well if the ground was rotten, for he dug a grave with his left foot ; but Hillyer could bowl with deadly accuracy and with either break whatever the state of the wicket, at a pace which at different times justified him in playing for both the Fast Bowlers and the Slow at Lord's. There were other useful change-bowlers with, a little later, a deadly swerver, in the person of Hinkly, and the attack was backed up by brilliant fielding. Ned Wenman behind the wicket, padless and

gloveless, mind you, yet stumping batsmen off Alfred Mynn and Hillyer, and Mynn himself at short-slip—and there was no better in England—Walter Mynn long-stopping to his brother—no sinecure that, we may be sure, for did not Alfred once hit a long-stop so hard on the chest that he spat blood for a fortnight?—Pilch at “mid-off,” Felix at point, and Tom Adams in the long field. “There was a pair for you,” said Fuller anent the latter two. “How often did you ever see Tom Adams miss a catch or miss throwing down the wicket if Mr. Felix called to him to throw in the chance of throwing a man out? And how often did you see Mr. Felix allow an overthrow, if he called on Adams to take a shot? Why, never, and that’s about it!”

The Kent Eleven was great in every department of the game, but there was more than this that made for its success. There was the experience, judgment, and scrupulous honesty of Pilch and Wenman, the two “generals” of the side, there was the generous backing of the great landowners, the social attractions of Canterbury centring round the “Old Stagers” and IZ., and, most important of all, the eager patriotism of the county as a whole. No wonder that on the day of a big match the roads leading to Canterbury or Town Malling would be crowded by dawn, and by nine in the morning the inns would be full, and the spectators streaming on to the ground to secure a seat in the hop-waggons with which it was lined.

And whatever was the issue of the frank and friendly fray,  
 (Aye, and often has his bowling turned the issue of the day),  
 Still the Kentish men fought bravely, never losing hope or heart,  
 Every man of the eleven glad and proud to play his part.  
 And with five such mighty cricketers, ’twas but natural to win,  
 As Felix, Wenman, Hillyer, Fuller Pilch, and Alfred Mynn.

Kent in the forties were a fair match for the Rest of England, and their matches together were among the great events of the season. Of these one of the most sensational was that played for Fuller Pilch’s benefit at Town Malling in August 1839, when, thanks to the bowling of Alfred Mynn and Hillyer, Kent beat England by 2 runs. In ’41, in the match at Lord’s, the same pair of bowlers bowled unchanged; there was only one double-figure in England’s two innings, and Kent triumphed by 70 runs. William Lillywhite, though now in his fiftieth year, bowled unchanged for England in this match, as he had already done on the same ground no less than three times in the Gentlemen *v.* Players match—a feat quite without parallel in big cricket. In 1847 Kent played England three matches, and won them all. The game at Lord’s was in honour of Alfred Mynn, and worthily did the great man play his part, taking 10 wickets, scoring 48 in the first innings—by far the highest score—and eventually making the winning hit. In 1848

Kent were beaten, but in 1849, for the last time at even odds, they trounced England to the tune of 256 runs.

These two latter matches are notable for the extraordinary bowling performances of one Edmund Hinkly. In the '48 match, his first at Lord's, Hinkly took 16 wickets—all 10 in England's second innings—whilst in the next year he clearly won the game by taking 8 wickets in the first innings and dismissing England for 48. He is the first of that long line of left-hand bowlers which has never failed Kent down to the present day, and, with the exception of Noah Mann, he is the first authenticated swerver. His career with Kent was short, and he seems soon to have drifted away to professional engagements up North, where he was frequently to be found playing as a given man against the touring elevens, but in his prime he must have found a place in any representative side.

Before leaving Kent, we must not forget to speak of that most delightful of cricket institutions—the Canterbury Week. There are now many cricket weeks in the South of England, and in the North the Scarborough Festival provides a brilliant finale to the season; but it is safe to say that in its combination of rigorous cricket with an atmosphere of festivity and good fellowship, Canterbury still stands without a rival. Not even at Lord's is the continuity of traditions so sensible; no county, I would venture to say, has so vivid and affectionate a hold on its own past history. For an admirable summary of the origin of the Week, and of the first fifty years of its history, I commend to the reader a little book by E. Milton Small, published in 1892, and to this I am indebted for the following facts. In 1835 two gentlemen, John Baker and W. de Chair Baker, assisted in forming the Beverley Cricket Club, which played on a ground belonging to their family on the fringe of the city. In 1841 the return match, Kent *v.* All England, was played on this ground, and it was then that John Baker suggested to the Hon. Frederick Ponsonby that he should persuade some of his Cambridge friends, whose fame as amateur actors was by this time spreading, to come to Canterbury for the week, and provide entertainment in the evening for the large number of visitors whom the cricket attracted. The actors readily agreed, and on August 1, 1842, the Canterbury Cricket Week entered upon its famous career.

The first match of the week was Kent *v.* All England, the second Gentlemen of Kent *v.* Gentlemen of England, and this programme continued until 1855, when Kent, now but a shadow of its Homeric self, joined forces with Surrey in both matches. In 1856 and 1857 Sussex supplanted Surrey as Kent's ally, and in 1859 the North played the South in the opening match. The venue of the Week was changed after the opening year to the new ground of the Beverley (or, as it was now called, "The East Kent Cricket Club"),

a field near the Cavalry Barracks ; but in 1847 the final move was made to its present home, the St. Lawrence Ground, once the property of the Hospital of St. Lawrence, founded in 1137 "for leprous monks and the poor parents and relatives of the monks of St. Augustine.

Of the other constituent element of the Week, the theatricals, room can be found for but little here. The "Old Stagers" are, as an institution, now old indeed, but they play with undiminished enthusiasm and success, even though in Gerald Crutchley we have perhaps seen the last of those admirable folk who played cricket all day and took the boards at night. The "Original Epilogue" preserves each year the true spirit of the Week as faithfully as it was foreshadowed in the famous prologue written and spoken on the opening night of the first Festival by Tom Taylor:—

But hullo ! Who are these I see down there ?  
 Pilch, Lillywhite, and Fenner, I declare !  
 How are ye all ? Where men like you assemble  
 It's not a little that shall make me tremble.  
 While I stand here as champion of cricket,  
 You mind your fielding—I'll keep up my wicket.  
 You will stand by me ? Never mind my county ;  
 Cricketers are all brothers : such I count ye.  
 Your cricketer no cogging practice knows,  
 No trick to favour friends or cripple foes ;  
 His motto still is : " May the best man win."  
 Let Sussex boast her Taylor, Kent her Mynn ;  
 Your cricketer, right English to the core,  
 Still loves the man best he has licked before.

## CHAPTER IX

### WILLIAM CLARKE AND THE FIRST ALL-ENGLAND ELEVEN

IN the history of cricket there are certain figures that stand like milestones on the way: John Small and David Harris, who together "found out cricket" on the slopes of Broad-Halfpenny; William Lillywhite, who led the van in the bowlers' "march of intellect"; W. G. Grace, who, in batting, turned the single-stringed instrument into many-chorded lyre; the Jam Sahib, in whose hand the bat became a wizard's wand and orientated afresh the setting of the cricket field. Among such figures as these must we place William Clarke of Nottingham. His greatest claim on immortality we will consider later, but first let us know something of him as a man and a player of the game.

Born at Nottingham in 1798, he was, like William Lillywhite, a bricklayer by trade; he must have taken to cricket early, for he was no more than eighteen when his name first appears in the Notts Eleven. For the next twenty years he played regularly for that club, attaining in it the position of acknowledged "General," even as old Richard Nyren had done at Hambledon. Considering his success and reputation, it is really astonishing to read that it was not until his forty-eighth year that his services were applied for by the Marylebone Club, and that he was engaged there as a practice bowler. But, once he arrived there, he lost no time in establishing himself beyond criticism as the leading slow bowler in England. In 1847 he and Lillywhite took all 20 wickets in the Gentlemen *v.* Players match at Lord's, bowling unchanged through both innings after Hillyer and Dean had opened the attack without success. For the next seven years he was invariably picked for the representative match, appearing therefore in it for the last time in his fifty-fifth year.

But if final proof be needed of this veteran player's astonishing success and vitality right down to the closing years of his life, it may be found in the statistics recorded by Mr. Ashley-Cooper in his edition of *The Cricket Field* of Clarke's annual bag of wickets for the All-England Eleven in the years 1847 to 1853. In those seven years he took 2,385 wickets, an average of 340 per season. His



smallest bag was 222, his largest, that in the last of the years mentioned, 476 ! It is, of course, true that the All-England Eleven constantly played against odds, and that many of its opponents were players of very little experience or skill, and that Clarke had a rooted dislike to ever taking himself off at all ; but the record is, nevertheless, unanswerable. Moreover, there is the unanimous testimony of many of his greatest contemporaries, Felix, Caffyn, and Dick Daft among them, that for accuracy and cunning alike Clarke stood in a class by himself.

How, then, did he bowl ? The first point to notice is that he was in method a throw-back to a far earlier type. The forties and fifties of the last century were pre-eminently the era of fast bowling ; Alfred Mynn had set a pattern which had fired innumerable imitators, length and headwork were at a discount, and the " fast and ripping " school held the field. Now Clarke, on his own confession, had learnt most of his game from the famous William Lambert of Surrey. The latter, of whose exploits and inglorious exit we have heard something in an earlier chapter, had somewhere about 1818 attained to a slow almost round-arm delivery, by which he rose distinctly superior to the players of his day, but from which he was debarred by the authorities, headed by William Ward, " who could not play him " ! This style was probably a revival of the original " lobbing " bowling first devised by Tom Walker of Hambledon, in the latter years of the eighteenth century. That Clarke closely modelled himself on that of Lambert is clear from Mr. Budd's statement in *The Cricket Field* that his own and Lambert's method was retrospectively described as " Clarke's."

Both Pycroft, who must constantly have watched him and William Caffyn, who played under his captaincy in the All-England Eleven, have left us vivid descriptions of his bowling. A short run up to the wicket, the ball delivered from about the level of the hip, a curving flight, and a very abrupt rise from the pitch : add to these a consistent spin from leg, enough to make him prefer to spin against the hill at Lord's, and a positive genius for detecting the weak points in an opponent's armour. Many witnesses have borne amusing testimony to Clarke's habit of walking round the ground on the morning of a match and sizing up the opposing batsmen as he watched them at practice. " I have summed them up," he would say to Felix, " and they are worth (so many) an innings. I have noted three or four pretty hitters among them, when they understand the bowling, but they are as good as ready money to me. We shall have ' an accident ' with these men very soon." Again : " Beg pardon, sir," he would remark to some player as he came in to bat, " but ain't you from Harrow ? Then we shan't want a man down there." To a fieldsmen : " Stand for the Harrow drive between point and middle

wicket." The fast-footed batsman he considered a certain prey, and equally the man who "went to hit all round": "that's tempting Providence." That brilliant hitter, Felix, scored well off Clarke the first time he played him, but when next they met the bowler outwitted him with a species of "the third degree," and "Clarke's master," as Felix was hailed on going in to bat, returned for 0.

There is one very interesting fact that links up this great figure of the "middle ages" with modern history. In the year 1854 William Clarke brought his eleven down to play against twenty-two of West Gloucestershire at Bristol. In his book, *Cricket*, the Champion records how this was the first really important match that he ever saw, and how, though then only a child of six, he remembers watching the play with his mother, and of how Clarke's figure still stood out in his memory as he wrote. In that match Clarke took 18 wickets. In the next year's game he did not play himself, but watched the play, and was so impressed with young E. M.'s work at long-stop that he gave the boy a bat, and at the end of the match presented Mrs. Grace with a copy of the recently published *Cricket Notes by W. Bolland, with a letter containing practical hints by William Clarke*. That book, with its inscription—

Presented to MRS. GRACE  
By WILLIAM CLARKE,  
Secretary All-England XI.,

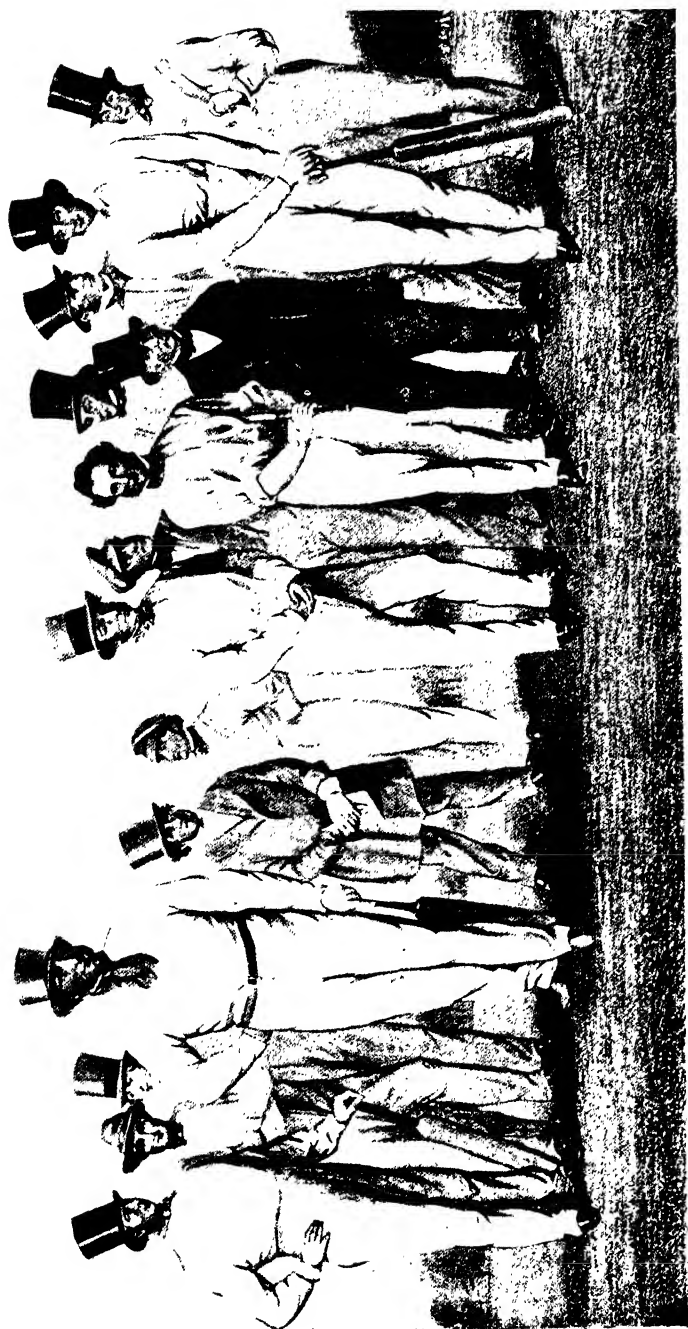
was still in W. G.'s keeping when he wrote, a relic memorable indeed, uniting the founder of the All-England Eleven with the greatest of all "All-England" cricketers.

It is, moreover, a curious coincidence that in flight, in subtlety, and in reliance upon a judicious use of his field, the two men's bowling methods must have been very similar. Grace recorded his opinion that no under-arm bowler so effective as Clarke had appeared since his day; and Pycroft, writing at the end of last century, was convinced that Clarke, at his best, would have required all the modern batsman's vigilance and care if he was to be met successfully.

When the fame of his bowling first began to spread among the great players of the South, it was greeted with an amused contempt. Pilch affected to despise all under-arm bowling, and said, "Gentlemen, I think you might put me in on Monday morning, and get me out by about Saturday night"; but events taught him wisdom, and though in the end, on Clarke's own statement, he played him better than anyone else, it was only by careful batting and patience, "waiting until he got his chance and then making the most of it."

Great, however, as was William Clarke's prowess on the field, his peculiar claim to immortality rests upon other grounds. For it was he who originated and captained the famous All-England Eleven. There had, of course, been England sides before—many of them—but they had been elevens selected either by the M.C.C. or by private backers to do duty in some particular match. Never before had anyone thought of organizing and maintaining in the field for a series of matches, and over a period of years, a side that represented the very cream of English cricket; but that is exactly what Clarke did. At the end of August 1846 the All-England Eleven took the field for the first time against Twenty of Sheffield on the Hyde Park Ground at that place, and was defeated by 5 wickets. In the following year nothing further was done until August, but then the enterprise was fairly launched in a series of matches in the Midlands and North, continuing as late as October 4th, 5th, and 6th, when the season was ended with a game against "Eighteen of Stourbridge with Hillyer and Box." In original intention it was, of course, a business enterprise, and interesting light is thrown upon this side of it by a conversation recorded in *The Cricket Field* between Clarke and Dark, then proprietor of Lord's ground. "'I heard,' said Dark, 'of Clarke having made a match against some side at Newcastle, where, as I told him, there were no players at all fit to stand against him.' 'Never you mind,' replied Clarke, 'I shall play sides strong or weak, with numbers or with bowlers given, and shall play all over the country too—mark my words—and it will make good for cricket, and for your trade too.' And sure enough the increase in my bat and ball trade bears witness to Clarke's long-sighted speculation." To this Pycroft bears elsewhere further testimony in the vast increase of Dark's business, and the ever-growing pile of willow stocked in a corner of the ground at Lord's.

That Clarke was equally right in his other contention—that it would make good for cricket in general—cannot possibly be doubted. The eleven were the focus of attraction wherever they went; it was every cricketer's ambition to see them play, still more to be chosen to do battle with them, and a double figure with the bat, or a wicket or two with the ball against the acknowledged champions of England, would win a man local renown for ever. They were truly missionaries of cricket, winning to knowledge and appreciation of the game whole districts where hitherto it had been primitive and undeveloped; moreover, their matches were the great trials of all budding talent. They accelerated cricket circulation, and many a fine young professional cricketer who, but for them would have been 'born to blush unseen,' was marked down by Clarke and his experts, approached with a firm business offer, and so launched on a career of fame.





The life of a member of this famous eleven was decidedly strenuous; be it remembered that in its early days railways were as yet little more than in their infancy, and railway travelling anything but the comfortable and speedy business that we know to-day. Moreover, though the great centres of population throughout the country were now more or less linked together, journeys to the more out of the way matches had invariably to be made by coach. The time of travelling involved in a programme of over thirty matches was quite prodigious. Often the eleven would travel down from the North all through the night to play in one of the big fixtures in London, or find themselves condemned to a five or six hours' coach drive in the dark through the muddy lanes of Devonshire and Cornwall, or over the bleak flats of Lincolnshire. Dick Daft, in his *Kings of Cricket*, gives us a delightful sketch of a typical adventure of the eleven after a match at Redruth, in Cornwall. They were driving a coach and four in inky darkness along a moorland road, with a deep ditch on either side of them; to make matters worse, a thunderstorm came on. Old George Parr, the then captain of the side, was thoroughly nervous, and his apprehensions were not exactly allayed by the ceaseless volley of matchless malediction poured out by his neighbour, an officer who had ridden in the charge at Balaclava, but found his present experience far more alarming. Parr, who was convinced that any moment might be their last, besought him to moderate the flow of his language, lest he might die with all his imperfections so manifestly upon his head. At last, however, they struck a lonely cottage, and rapped on the door for food and shelter. A window at length opened to the vision of an old man in a nightcap, and with a blunderbuss at his shoulder, which he proceeded to level at George Parr's head. As he was as deaf as an adder, it was with the greatest difficulty that he was at last convinced of their peaceful intentions, and persuaded to let the travellers in.

After a hearty meal, the party were assembling to continue their journey, when one of their number—the great fast bowler, John Jackson—was found to be missing. Repeated calls were unavailing, but at last he emerged from the dairy looking as if he had been disturbed in the middle of a shave, as the lower half of his face was completely coated in what looked like lather, but subsequently transpired to be clotted cream!

For such arduous work as this, pay at the rate of between four and six pounds per match, according to the length of the journey involved, cannot be considered a very generous return. Old Clarke was pretty close-fisted in his financial dealings, and eventually in 1852 things came to a head in the form of an open breach between him and some of his fellow-professionals, and the consequent formation of the second great touring combination known as "The

United All-England Eleven." But before we can pass on to the time when the two great elevens used to meet each other at Lord's in what was admittedly the greatest and most keenly contested match of the year, something more remains to be said of the famous players who constituted Clarke's original team.

If Clarke was the originator of the All-England Eleven, George Parr was its captain and greatest batsman in its palmiest days. Like his famous predecessor who discovered him, he was a Nottinghamshire man, born and bred at Radcliffe-on-Trent, where his family had been gentlemen farmers on the same land for two centuries past. He was just nineteen when, on the strength of a successful appearance in one of Clarke's trial matches on the Trent Bridge ground, he was selected to play for the North against the M.C.C. with Fuller Pilch at Lord's. His side, thanks to some typical bowling by their captain and Redgate, defeated the strong Marylebone team by an innings, but Parr made but a single run. Almost exactly a year later he appeared on the same ground in a match between two fine elevens captained by Fuller Pilch and Felix respectively, played in the latter gentleman's honour, and watched for a time by the Prince Consort; in the second innings he made 59, by far the highest score in the game, and his reputation was made. Prevented by illness from taking part in the first of the All-England matches, he made a really sensational debut for them in the next year, 1847, when in his first three games he scored 100 at Leicester, 78 not out at York, and 64 at Manchester, each the highest score in the game, and each against eighteen or more in the field. Two years later he was spoken of as the inevitable successor to Fuller Pilch as the champion batsman of England, and by the time of William Clarke's death, when he took over the captaincy of the All-England Eleven, the "Lion of the North," as he came to be called, stood alone.

Thick set, and on the shortish side, with the blue eyes so common among the greatest sportsmen, with a fine head of auburn hair and heavy moustache and side-whiskers, his was always a commanding figure on the field. He was apt to be hot-tempered and difficult except with his intimates, but the professionals who made history in his great elevens almost all speak of him with admiration and affection. He was a great all-round sportsman, devoted to his gun and his rod, and impatient of the administrative side of his work as captain of the A.E.E. This he ultimately handed over to a lieutenant who was destined to win renown not inferior to his own—Richard Daft.

If Parr came to wear Pilch's mantle, it was by methods curiously contrasted with those of the great Kent player. Pilch, as we have seen, was the apostle of the upright, forward style. Parr crouched somewhat at the wicket, bending his left knee and arching his back,

and keeping very low over the bat, both in forward and back play. He was one of the first men who discarded the "dead-bat" method of defence and played back hard. He was also a fine cutter, and a driver who used his feet and left his ground to a then unparalleled extent. But "the glory of his play" was his leg-hitting, and by common consent there has never been before or after him so masterly a player of the genuine sweep to leg. He would advance the left leg well down the wicket, with head well over the bent knee, catch the ball on the half volley or the rise, and swing it behind him to the ropes. Caffyn, in his book, *71 Not Out*, gives the lie direct to the theory that Parr hit straight balls to leg—that was an innovation reserved for an even greater name in the next decade. Moreover, he rarely lifted the ball, though there is a story that when in one of the great matches at Lord's his opponents placed two long-legs for him, he hit the ball over their heads and out of the ground. One of his hits at Lord's, to square-leg over the old Tavern, must have been worthy to rank with "the Duke's strike." On the old Trent Bridge ground there stood a tree just on a line with his best leg-hits; this came to be known as "George Parr's tree," and when he died, where he had been born and had lived, at Radcliffe-on-Trent, in 1891, a branch from this tree was placed among the wreaths on his coffin. Parr, in his early years, was a magnificent deep-field, and could throw well over a hundred yards. In generalship, determination, and enthusiasm his contemporaries considered him a captain unsurpassed.

Of the collective strength of the first All-England Eleven there can be no doubt at all. Pilch, Mynn, Felix, and Parr made up a formidable quartet of batsmen, but this was reinforced by Joseph Guy, another Nottinghamshire man of so graceful a style that Clarke said of him, "Elegance, all elegance, fit to play before the Queen in her parlour," as well as by Dorrington and Sewell, two sound batsmen, both of whom used to be chosen for the Players.

In bowling, Mynn was, of course, a perfect foil to Clarke and Lillywhite, while Hillyer was the beau-ideal of medium-paced bowlers, and to these must be added Martingell and Dean. The former, a capital all-round cricketer, and a fastish leg-break bowler, was, I believe, the second of the regular professional coaches at Eton College, the latter, a sturdy roundabout little Sussex man, known by some as "The Ploughboy," did splendid work for Sussex, the M.C.C., and the A.E.E. as a fast-medium bowler, enterprising batsman, and first-class long-stop. In 1862 he was engaged as a coach at Winchester College.

As the years went by the eleven recruited nearly all the best professional talent in the country. The regular wicket-keeper was Thomas Box, another Sussex man, who did not miss a single county engagement for twenty-four seasons, and "kept" for the



Players for nineteen years. He was at one time the proprietor of the Brunswick ground at Brighton, but subsequently went to Prince's, where he died quite suddenly while working the telegraph in the Middlesex and Notts match of 1876.

The greatest of all the early recruits was John Wisden. Born at Brighton in 1826, he was the mainstay for some years of the Sussex Eleven, which at that time included many notable players, and may almost claim the county supremacy in the interregnum between the great days of Kent and the revival of Surrey cricket at the newly opened Kennington Oval. There have been few eminent cricketers less gifted in natural physique than Wisden. No more than 5 feet 4 inches in height, he weighed little over 7 stone when he began his career, and though weight came to him, he must be written down as easily the smallest fast bowler who ever made history. History he did make, as may be clearly seen in the summary of his performances compiled by Mr. Ashley-Cooper for the 1913 *Wisden*. In twelve seasons, between 1848 and 1859, he took no fewer than 2,707 wickets, or an average of over 225 a season, and in 1851 his bag was 455! But perhaps his greatest title to fame rests in his unique performance of clean bowling all 10 wickets in the second innings of North *v.* South at Lord's in 1850—a feat without parallel in the history of first-class cricket. He bowled from the pavilion end, and in a footnote to the match in *Scores and Biographies* it is stated that “without exaggeration his balls turned a yard from the off.”

It is curious that he should be found in the ranks of the North, but the explanation is that he and George Parr had recently acquired a new ground at Leamington, in Warwickshire, and he was therefore considered to be domiciled in the North. In style, Wisden is described in *Scores and Biographies* as “very fast and ripping,” but he was probably never more than fast-medium. His action was beautifully smooth and rhythmical, a true round-arm in the days when the hand was steadily getting higher in spite of the law. By common consent no bowler of his pace was ever straighter or steadier in length. Wisden was also a capital batsman of a very correct, “pendulum” method. His highest score—a very long one in those days—was 148 for Sussex against Yorkshire in 1855, in the first big match ever played on the famous Bramall Lane ground. It was the general opinion of those who knew him that no cricketer in England would have had a chance against him in a single-wicket match. Between 1852 and 1855 he was engaged at Harrow School, where his hard work and charm of manner combined to make him most popular. In the autumn of 1855 he set up, in partnership with Fred Lillywhite, a cricketing depot near Leicester Square, and though this partnership was dissolved three years later, he continued in the work of building up that now great business. In 1864 he

published the first issue of his *Cricketer's Almanack*, then a very modest work confined simply to the scores of the leading matches. Since that date the sequence is unbroken, and subsequent to 1879 *Wisden* is, with a few exceptions, obtainable for a reasonably small sum; but the issues prior to that year are really scarce.

John Wisden was one of the prime movers in the next stage of development of the peripatetic elevens. To some extent, no doubt, the financial success of Clarke's original enterprise and the amount of talent now available over and above his requirements must have suggested the formation of a second more or less representative eleven. But, sad to say, the most cogent reason seems to have lain in the profound dissatisfaction felt by a good many of the leading professionals, especially those of the South, at the treatment they had received at Clarke's hands. What was their precise grievance I have been unable to discover, but Clarke was reputed to be very close-fisted over the payment of his men, as well as something of a martinet in the field. Whatever the trouble was, several members of his side, headed by Wisden and Dean, who became secretaries of the new venture, seceded and formed the United England Eleven. Adams, John Lillywhite, and Jemmy Grundy went with them, and on August 26, 1852, the new team opened its career with a match against Twenty Gentlemen of Hampshire on Daniel Day's ground at Southampton. A week later, during a match at Sheffield, the members of the U.E.E. drew up a manifesto to the effect that none of them would henceforth play in any game (county matches excepted) which might be controlled by William Clarke.

For the next ten years and more professional cricket in England was to a great extent divided into two camps. Not until after Clarke's death did the two great elevens ever meet each other in what subsequently became the great match of the season, and in 1862 a further feud sprang up between northern and southern professionals which culminated in 1865, when some of the most prominent members of the United Eleven broke away and formed the United South of England Eleven. There were other imitators as well, but none seriously challenged the supremacy of these three great teams, which monopolized for thirty years—down to about 1876—all the best paid talent of the country, until at length they themselves had to give way before the new enthusiasm for county cricket.

## CHAPTER X

### COUNTY CRICKET IN THE "MIDDLE AGES"

#### SUSSEX.

WITH an organization unbroken since 1839, Sussex boasts itself the oldest county *club* in existence. Cricket had been played in the county from a very early date. Richard Newland, Nyren's coach, was a Slindon man, and Noah Mann, the first of all swervers, though he played for Hambledon, came from North Chapel. At the beginning of the last century Brighton began to be a great centre for numerous matches, played often under the patronage of the Prince of Wales, subsequently George IV. The original ground was that known as The Level, a little to the north of where St. Peter's Church now stands. In 1822 a wall was built round it, and it was henceforth known as Ireland's Gardens. This ground changed hands several times, and in *Scores and Biographies* appears under the name of its successive proprietors, and it was here that was played the last of the famous "Round Arm Experimental Matches" between Sussex and All England in 1827.

The year 1835 is a notable landmark in the history of county cricket, witnessing as it did what is, I believe, the first genuine inter-county match between a northern and southern eleven. On September 7th and 8th, on the Forest Ground at Nottingham, Notts beat Sussex by 3 wickets. So important was the game that William Ward came especially from the Isle of Wight to see it, and inasmuch as the great Lillywhite was an absentee, Sussex could feel well satisfied with the result. A picturesque account of this match, from the pen of William Howitt, is quoted on page 234 of Box's *The English Game of Cricket*. Five years later Sussex turned the tables on Notts at Trent Bridge, and in 1843 defeated the redoubtable men of Kent by 20 runs, and the M.C.C. at Lord's by 5 wickets. In the next eleven years they won nine victories over Kent, and although the latter were admittedly becoming something of a veteran side, the achievement is enough to label Sussex a great eleven. At the very end of September 1847 Sussex (with Alfred Mynn) met and defeated a practically representative eleven of All England. This was the last match on the "Old Ground" in Ireland's Gardens, which for some years previous to this date

had been under the management of Tom Box, and the lease of which now fell in. Next year a move was made to the famous Brunswick Ground at Hove, or, as it was then called, "The Old Ground by the Sea." This remained the headquarters of Sussex cricket until 1871, when its turf was removed to its present home.

Mention has already been made of four great Sussex cricketers in Box, Lillywhite, Dean, and John Wisden. These were reinforced by old Lilly's son and nephew, John and James. The former was a fine batsman, who, in 1856, headed the English batting averages. He subsequently did admirable work as coach at Rugby and Harrow. His cousin James did not join the Sussex ranks until the early sixties, but he played regularly for the next twenty years, and captured nearly a thousand wickets with his left-hand medium bowling. Then there was "Tiny" Wells, a capital little all-rounder, only 5 feet 2 inches high, the first coach at the R.M.C., Sandhurst, and a member of Stephenson's Australian team, also the two Mr. Nappers (E. and W.), good cricketers both, and most enthusiastic and generous patrons of the game, and J. H. Hale, a famous hitter.

But the finest Sussex batsman in the early forties was undoubtedly C. G. Taylor, one of the great figures in the history of amateur cricket. He was in the Eton Eleven of 1834, in the Cambridge Elevens of 1836, 1838, and 1839, and in the latter year, when captain, made 65 against Oxford, the second highest score recorded in the University match down to 1851. As a freshman he played for the Gentlemen, but for some years was singularly unsuccessful in this game. In 1843, however, he played his memorable innings of 89 on a dreadful wicket, and against Lillywhite, Hillyer, Dean, and the formidable Redgate. His method of dismissal was curious, though not unique, for the same thing had already happened to Pilch. A fast ball from Hillyer jumped straight up and knocked off his white beaver hat, which fell upon his wicket. His fate is explicit on the score-sheet until this day: "C. G. Taylor, hat knocked on wicket, b Hillyer, 89"! In the previous year he had been the hero of a match at Lord's, England *v.* Kent. In making the highest score in the first innings he had one of his fingers broken by Alfred Mynn, but scored 19 runs, batting with one hand in the second innings, there being only one other double figure on the side.

Taylor's batting was always cited by those who knew him as a model of ease and grace. He was a brilliant field and useful bowler, and altogether a most versatile man, as two legends about him will show. On one occasion he backed himself to learn to accompany his own songs on the piano in a very short time, and did so; on another to make himself, entirely unaided, a pair of trousers in which he would walk down King's Parade, Cambridge. He was also a fine tennis and billiards player, as well as an accomplished member of the "Old Stagers."

## NOTTINGHAMSHIRE.

*Jackson, Alfred Shaw, and Daft.*

As the latter half of the last century advanced, the tide of cricket set more and more in favour of the North, and Sussex, even before Surrey, began to find themselves no match for the men of Notts and Yorkshire.

It is to be remembered that these years saw the rapid acceleration of that process which, under the initial stimulus of the industrial revolution, was completely changing the distribution of population in England, and in which the South, from being the centre of activity and production in the country, now became for the most part residential and parasitic, while the manufacturing cities of the Midlands and the North became increasingly powerful magnets to vigorous youth. Furthermore, the industrial life of the mid-nineteenth century was, in one respect at least, more favourable to professional cricket than that of the agricultural South. At that time the system of piece-work was still prevalent, and the privately owned hand-loom had not yet given way to the big mechanical looms in factories. Hence it came about that the boys of Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire, when once badly bitten by the cricket bacillus, could and did so order their working day as to give themselves time for the game. An hour filched for practice in the morning could be made good at night, and the money lost from taking a Wednesday afternoon off for a match could be regained by working on Sunday.

An amusing confirmation of this is to be found in the early reminiscences of Alfred Shaw. His first employment at the age of ten took the form of crow-scaring on a neighbouring farmer's land, but the ruling passion was already strong within him, and the vicinity of another young "scarecrow" proved too strong a temptation. They were soon engaged in a bowling match at a wicket improvised from the farmer's hedge, and the crows were not slow to mark what was done amiss. Result—a summary and final divorce between cricket and agriculture. Shaw then was apprenticed as a hand-frame stocking-knitter, and there found many of his fellow-operatives just as determined as himself to get their regular practice, even if it was only in a yard some 30 yards by 6! The famous cricket nurseries of Lascelles Hall—richest of all cricket veins in Yorkshire—Sutton-in-Ashfield, Yeadon, and Arnold are further illustrations of the same truth.

The challenge to the cricketers of the South was beyond all question first issued by the men of Notts. The game, of course, was deep-rooted there, for as early as 1771 the county capital was playing Sheffield, and I have already tried to give some account of

their famous match with the M.C.C. in 1817. In those days the cricket was played on the Forest Ground, where no gate money could be taken; but in 1838 William Clarke opened the ground at Trent Bridge. But though Notts had beaten Sussex as early as 1835, and Kent at Town Mallings in 1840, county matches for some years to come played a very small part in the careers of the most famous players. This was true generally of all the best professionals in England, but more especially in the North, which formed the immediate recruiting-ground for the two great touring elevens, the A.E.E. and the U.E.E. Still, every now and again the Nottinghamshire men took the field together as a County Eleven, and a victory over an All-England side in 1853, followed by a double win over Surrey, established their reputation as a "great power."

Mention has already been made of some of the greatest Notts players in connection with the All-England Eleven, of which for some years they formed the most distinguished nucleus. But Clarke and Redgate, Parr and Guy had worthy supporters and successors in the mid-century seasons. There were two other Parrs in the original county eleven. Butler Parr for twenty years did yeoman service as a free-hitting batsman very similar in style to the first really great Australian player, Charles Bannerman; his daughter married that prince of players, Richard Daft. Sam Parr, George's brother, was in method, perhaps, more of a club cricketer than a "county man," but he often made runs, and was a terror against second-rate bowling. He was a queer character, devoted to the more annoying type of practical joke, and had a perfect genius for running himself or his partner out in attempts to liven up the game and please the crowd.

Of very different stamp was James Grundy, one of the greatest figures in Nottinghamshire history, and for some years in the fifties as steady and successful a bowler as there was in England. Bowling quick-medium, with no obvious finesse, his length was marvellously accurate—"he could keep on dropping 'em on a cheese-plate"—and he believed in the frontal attack. When urged to pitch one up to a batsman in the hope of getting him caught, Jimmy always replied, "No, I shan't. I shall gie him a good 'un," and he generally did. In 1854 he captured 196 wickets for under 5 apiece, and for seventeen years was a regular choice for the Players' Eleven. Like many other bowlers, he learnt to bat, and in the latter half of his career scored heavily. He had a very solid defence (he once batted 6½ hours for 103), but had no liking for very fast bowling on a nasty wicket, particularly for his colleague, John Jackson's; of which more anon.

Another very great bowler in the first Notts county side was Bickley. He, Hinkly, and Billy Buttress, of Cambridge, form a trio of bowlers who were probably as formidable as any in England, but

seem somehow to have missed their proper measure of renown. Bickley, like Buttress, was very often to be found in the ranks of the Twenty-two's opposed to the two great Elevens, and did immense execution for them. A stoutly built fellow and a noted sprint runner, his action was very economical; much, I suspect, after the manner of Mold's—a few paces, an easy swing, a fine length, and, above all, a nip off the pitch, excelled by no one until George Freeman of Yorkshire. Bickley's two most sensational performances were the capture of 8 wickets for 23 in the second innings of the Notts v. England match at Lord's in 1853, and the still more remarkable figures of 8 for 7, this time for England, and against Kent and Sussex combined in 1856.

The previous year, 1855, saw the first appearance for the county of John Jackson, by common agreement one of the greatest fast bowlers that ever lived. On the evidence of figures alone, his title to fame is unassailable. In the seven years, 1856–1862, he captured 1,899 wickets, with an average bag of 345 for three consecutive seasons. From his earliest years, when, as a small boy, he used to run barefoot after hounds and throw stones at every legitimate and illegitimate mark, Jackson was big, strong, and active, and by the time he appeared for Notts he stood over 6 feet high and weighed 15 stone. His action was a true round-arm, and though he bowled like a machine, always well within himself, his pace was truly terrific, and like that of the best of his school, he made the ball go slightly with his arm. On the fiery wickets then prevalent, especially at Lord's, he was altogether intimidating, and not a few of the best batsmen of the time were known to retire precipitately towards square-leg. He never liked being hit, and when things looked troublesome was apt to try an extra fast full pitch somewhere in the neighbourhood of the batsman's head! To the Twenty-twos he was literally a terror, and once for the A.E.E. against Twenty-two of Uppingham he bowled six men in seven balls. Against Sixteen of Oxford University he captured, in 1858, 16 wickets for 62, and, in 1862, 17 wickets for 63. The feat in which he took most pride himself was when for the North he got 9 Southern wickets and lamed—*sic visum superis*—Johnny Wisden so that he couldn't bat. Unlike most fast bowlers, Jackson was also an excellent hard-hitting batsman, who often scored well for Notts, and made 100 not out v. Kent in 1863. "Old Jack" was a great character; from his habit of blowing his nose violently whenever he got a wicket he was called "The Foghorn" by his colleagues, but with the world at large he soon earned the name of "The Demon," and well, we may believe, deserved it. Until the Champion became as much of a household word as the other G.O.M., Jackson, alone of cricketers, had appeared in the pages of *Mr. Punch*.

It is sad to read of his last years, when, but for the help of the

Cricketers' Fund Friendly Society and the kindly aid of friends in the North, Jackson must indeed have known positive destitution. Even as things were the contrast with the days of his strength and fame must have been bitter enough. In 1861 the greatest bowler in the world; in 1901 a pauper, wellnigh unknown, dying in the infirmary of a Liverpool workhouse.

For many years Notts were extraordinarily strong in bowling. Just about the time Jackson broke down and left the county side two first-class left-hand bowlers came upon the scene, in George Wootton and J. C. Shaw, and no other county at that time enjoyed a similar advantage. The former, who died in 1924 in his ninetieth year, was on the fast side and nipped off the pitch. As Dick Daft used to say, "You had to be in time when you played George Wootton," and for many years he did great work for his county, as well as on the ground staff at Lord's. He retired from the game early, being, more happily than most of his contemporary professionals, the possessor of a pleasant farm at Clifton in Nottinghamshire. Daft ranked Jemmy Shaw even higher than Wootton, and the latter, interviewed by "Old Ebor" in 1900, declared that he saw no bowler in England at that time as good as "J. C." W. G., too, had a very high opinion of him, and records how in 1871 Shaw twice bowled him out for 0 in the first over; but he would not have been human had he failed to add that his scores in the second innings were 268 and 217! Shaw was on the fast side, and the ball came quick from the pitch, with just enough of the natural left-hander's break on it. 1867 was probably his best year, when he took over 450 wickets. As a bat he was probably worse even than Fred Morley. Mr. Ashley-Cooper has recorded that in 109 innings which Shaw commenced for his county he only once reached double figures!

In great contrast to Grundy, Jackson, Wootton, and Shaw, is the next of the Notts worthies who claims our notice—Chris Tinley—one of the best lob-bowlers in cricket history. Like Tom Walker of Hambledon, David Buchanan, Ted Peate, and G. Simpson-Hayward, he was originally a fast bowler, but when once he took up the other style he came to be rated as inferior to Clarke alone; and Alfred Shaw, writing in 1901, ranked him definitely higher than the famous Sussex lobster, Walter Humphreys. Like the "Homeric" bowlers, he delivered hip-high and at a fair pace, giving the batsman little chance of making ground to him. His success against inexperienced players, such as were often to be found in the Twenty-twos and in Australia, which he visited with Parr's side in 1863, was phenomenal, but he was consistently successful also in the best-class cricket. As a bat he had a somewhat crooked defence, but was a dashing hitter, and as a fieldsman at point he ranked with Bob Carpenter and E. M. Grace.



The Notts wicket-keeper in the early county days was Charlie Brown, "Mad Charlie" as he was often called from his highly excitable temperament. Dick Daft tells how, when anyone began to talk cricket with him as he sat at his colour-tub at some dyeworks in Nottingham, Brown would get into such a state of excitement that he would splash his colour left and right into the neighbouring tubs, with a kaleidoscopic effect upon his colleagues' cloths. As a stumper he was quite first-rate, and particularly good at the rising ball. One trick he had which must be almost unique: he could bowl—or perhaps jerk—a ball from behind his back with extraordinary accuracy. In 1864 the Notts side played a match in France, and this holiday fixture apparently afforded him the opportunity of displaying his skill *in corpore vili*—such, at least, I imagine to be the context of the lines in Dean Hole's cricket song:—

That England has no rival  
Well know the trembling pack  
Whom Charlie Brown by Calais town  
Bowled out behind his back.

Our gallery still lacks the portraits of two men whom their contemporaries have united in describing as the most accurate bowler and the most finished and graceful batsman within the whole range of their experience. In a sense Alfred Shaw and Richard Daft belong to a later generation than that with which we have hitherto been concerned, and both are actually found playing in first-class cricket in the nineties: yet Daft's first match for Notts was as long ago as 1858, and Shaw's no more than six years later; so that though they long outlived the generation of Jackson, Parr, and Tinley, their early successes were won in that good company, and their reputations were made before most of those great players had finally passed into retirement.

Alfred Shaw was born in 1842 at Burton Joyce, a village five miles north of Nottingham, on the River Trent: mention has already been made of his first ventures into cricket, and rough and ready though they were, they served to ground him well. At the very end of the season of 1863 he played for Notts Colts against the County Eleven, and took 7 wickets for 41. In May of the following year he, in company with William Oscroft, a brilliant young batsman and subsequent captain of Notts, made his first appearance at Lord's for the Colts of England with the M.C.C. and Ground, and took 13 wickets in the match for 63 runs. From that moment he never looked back. To his innumerable feats with the ball it is obviously impossible to do justice here, and the curious may find them set forth in all their astonishing detail in the supplement to his own book of *Reminiscences* narrated to and edited by A. W. Pullin ("Old Ebor"). We must content ourselves with but one

or two instances to illustrate his accuracy, his destructiveness, and the long persistence of his form.

As to his accuracy we need surely go no further than the aggregate statistics of his whole bowling career, which I set down with some trepidation, mathematics never having been my strong point ! In twenty-seven seasons, of which six at least comprised only a very few games, Shaw bowled in first-class matches 24,700 overs, of which 16,922 were maidens, for 24,107 runs, and 2,051 wickets. So far as I know, no bowler in the history of the game, not even Shaw's own disciple, Attewell, can claim a record for accuracy even approximating to this, in which more than half the overs bowled over a period of thirty-one years were maidens, and the debit of runs is smaller than the total of overs bowled.

His sensational performances were innumerable, and a very few must suffice. In 1870, playing for the M.C.C., on the ground staff of which he served for eighteen years, against Thorndon Hall, he took 18 wickets (9 in each innings) for 52 runs. In 1875, for Notts against a very strong M.C.C. side he captured 7 wickets for 7 runs in 41 overs (36 maidens), his victims including the Champion, Lord Harris, and some other leading amateurs ; and in 1884, twenty years, be it remembered, from his debut at Lords, he took 14 Gloucestershire wickets for 65 runs, and did the hat-trick in each innings !

Originally he bowled almost above medium, but he soon decreased his speed, and for the greater part of his career was, if anything, a little under that pace. His action was a perfectly easy and natural round-arm ; he could turn the ball both ways, particularly from the off, but his predominant characteristic was, of course, length. Though the stories of his being able to pitch the ball on a sixpence are described by Shaw himself as apocryphal, no more accurate bowler ever lived, and to sheer accuracy he added considerable subtlety in pace and flight. Unlike the medium-paced bowlers such as Attewell of the next generation, he believed little in the off theory, but preferred direct attack on the wicket, and, for his pace, a large number of his victims were clean bowled. Even apart from his astonishing career as a bowler, Shaw's is a noteworthy figure in the history of the game. In conjunction with James Lillywhite and Shrewsbury, he took four teams to Australia (tours that will be touched on in their proper place), and after leaving his county in 1887 he devoted himself, under the ægis of that enthusiastic sportsman, Lord Sheffield, to the search for and training of new talent for the county of Sussex, a chapter in his life which culminated in his reappearance in first-class cricket after an interval of seven years, and at the age of fifty-two, for the county of his adoption. Wherever he went, and especially in his long service with the Notts, Shaw's name stood for hard work, clean living, and straight dealing,

and it is significant that, when the fortunes of Nottinghamshire began later to decline, a member of the team was heard to say, very sorrowfully, "We never went downhill while Alfred Shaw was with us."

One permanent and universal mark has he left upon the game, for Mr. Ashley-Cooper tells us in *Lord's and the M.C.C.* that it was Alfred Shaw who suggested the whitewashing of the croases instead of having them cut into the turf, as was the universal practice down to about the year 1865.

Nottinghamshire have known lean years in bowling, in spite of the very remarkable gallery of bowlers to which they can point ; but for close upon eighty years the "apostolic succession" of great batsmen has been practically unbroken. It begins with George Parr in 1845, it is maintained to-day by Hardstaff, it was raised to its zenith in the nineties by William Gunn and Arthur Shrewsbury, and the batsman that links that wonderful pair to the first figure in the line is Richard Daft. To say that he was the greatest of all Notts batsmen would be to challenge criticism (for has not W. G. himself nominated Shrewsbury as his first choice from all the world ?), and it may be maintained that William Gunn equalled him in point of style, but to his contemporaries at least Daft stood alone as a model of grace and commanding execution. His was essentially what Mr. Cardus would call "the grand manner" in batting ; there was none of that grubbing about the blockhole, which Pycroft so deplored ; he stood up to his full height at the crease, and was the beau-ideal of that "upright and manly style" of play which the early "Lillywhites" always urged upon the young cricketers. He was quick on his feet and always ready to drive ; he made full use of his wrists, and he was a master of the under-leg stroke of which W. L. Murdoch was perhaps the last regular exponent ; but the greatest feature of Daft's batting was his masterly treatment of the quick-rising ball on fast and for the most part fiery wickets. In his time he had to play many very great fast bowlers, and he was at his very best against them. Caffyn relates how Edgar Willsher once said to him : "When Richard plays that ball (a good length one on the off-stump), I always feel as if he said, 'If that's all you can do, Ned, you'd better put somebody else on at once.'" As an offset to this evidence we may notice Pycroft's verdict that there was never a man so contemptuous of a shooter as Daft !

In 1862, on an impossible wicket at Lord's, he played an innings of 118 for the North *v.* South which was literally the talk of the season, four hours with not the ghost of a chance under conditions that the modern batsman would denounce if met with on the village green. Within two years of his first appearance in big cricket, *Bell's Life* could write of a quite modest innings : "Those who have

witnessed Daft play an innings know that it is cricket, consequently we cannot say more than that it was obtained in his usual style."

In one respect Daft holds a record that is almost unique: with the exception of E. J. Diver, Warwickshire, J. H. Parsons and W. R. Hammond, he is the only man who has ever appeared for both Gentlemen and Players in the representative matches. He first appeared in 1858, when he played as an amateur both for his county and for the Gentlemen at the Oval; but then adopting the game as his profession he represented the Players from 1860 to 1879 and his county for two years longer. He then retired, but for ten years continued to make any number of runs in the best club cricket up North, thereby reserving for the last what was perhaps the most sensational event of his whole career, his reappearance for his county at the age of nearly fifty-six and in company with his own son, in the Bank Holiday match against Surrey at the Oval. For a moving account of that memorable day I commend to the reader Richard Daft's own charming book, *Kings of Cricket*, in which there is all too little about himself, but very much that is at once informing and delightful about the great players of two cricketing generations. Indeed, I know few more interesting things from the historical standpoint than the chapters in their respective books in which Daft and Shaw review the development of the game within their own lifetime; they and the Champion are the main piles in the bridge which unites the days of "The All England" with those when county cricket was first systematically organized and the first-class game entered upon the last stage of its evolution.

#### SURREY'S SUPREMACY.

No county has a longer and prouder cricket history than Surrey, and in some respects none has suffered stranger vicissitudes. For those who wish to study that history in detail there is the *locus classicus* of Lord Alverstone's book, *Surrey Cricket: its History and Associations*. For a short summary of the first century of Surrey cricket there is an excellent chapter in Pycroft, and for a statistical review down to the year 1895 there is a little paper monograph by that enthusiast for "cricketana," the Rev. R. S. Holmes. Cricket was played on Kennington Common in 1730. Many of the finest players of the Hambledon Club were Surrey men, and after its dissolution Surrey as a county claimed their support and entered upon a period of triumphant success. Between 1792 and 1810 Surrey played All England every year, and more than held their own; indeed, on several occasions they gave England odds, and in 1809 actually lent to them the greatest all-round player in the world, their own William Beldham—and still they won. With 1810 this great chapter in Surrey history ends, and for the next thirty-four

years the county as such is practically non-existent ; in the whole of that time only eleven county matches are recorded. For this there were probably two main reasons : the old generation of famous players and generous patrons had passed away, and, for lack of the focus of a recognized county ground, Surrey cricket was now disintegrated among a host of prosperous and powerful clubs, such as the Montpelier, Richmond, Godalming, Dorking, Chertsey, and Reigate.

The present Surrey County Club is really the creation of the Montpelier C.C. In 1844 the latter club, being threatened with the loss of their "Beehive Ground" at Walworth, cast about for a new habitation, and found it in a market-garden at Kennington, ten acres in extent and oval in shape. A committee of members, meeting in the autumn of that year, decided to entrust the preparation and management of their new ground to their existing President, W. Houghton ; it was in his name that the first lease of the Oval was drawn up, the club financing the venture. During the winter four acres of turf were laid down, and on July 17, 1845, the first match ever played on the Oval took place, Montpelier *v.* Clapton.

Exactly five weeks later, at a meeting presided over by the famous William Ward, the great enterprise of a County Club was definitely launched, and in October, at the "Horns Tavern," in Kennington, a general meeting of Surrey cricketers was called, and their support and co-operation invited. The chair at that meeting was taken by the Hon. F. Ponsonby, who came over from Ireland expressly for the purpose, a service only typical of his unalterable devotion to the game. In their speeches after dinner, the Chairman, Mr. Pickering, Mr. Napper, and Mr. Ward explained the objects at which the club was aimed—to bring out the cricketing strength of the county, to provide it with "a local habitation and a name," to prove to the world that they inherited much of the prowess of their forefathers, who had been able to meet and beat All England single-handed. William Strahan was elected President, the Hon. F. Ponsonby Vice-President, an office which he held for fifty years, and W. Denison Secretary : the Surrey County Cricket Club was a *fait accompli*. On June 25, 1846, Surrey met Kent in the first county match ever played on the Oval, and won by 10 wickets.

For the first few years the programme of county matches was very modest, but the success of the new eleven was remarkable. In 1850 they beat Middlesex twice and Sussex and Kent once each, both the latter counties by an innings ; in the next year they defeated Notts and Yorks in the first of those great matches ever played. In 1854, however, the club was faced with a crisis : the proprietor, Mr. Houghton, followed after strange gods, and let out his ground for walking matches and poultry shows ! The Duchy of Cornwall refused to renew the lease ; fortunately, Mr. John Burrup, the

then secretary, succeeded in effecting a compromise, and the lease and management of the ground were transferred into the hands of the club itself, on terms which were, and, I believe, still remain, a testimony to the Duchy's generous interest in cricket.

By 1857 the corner was fairly turned : in that year the county played ten matches and won them all, with the exception of a game against Manchester (with Wisden and John Lillywhite), which they lost by 3 runs. In 1858 they were unbeaten, and defeated a very strong All-England side by an innings and 28 runs. Moreover, the finances of the club were prospering ; the building of the pavilion in 1858 proved a great attraction, and by 1861 the membership had almost reached a thousand, and the club's income had quadrupled in the last six years.

Now let us take a glance at the composition of this great eleven. First to be remembered are the three amateurs, F. P. Miller, C. G. Lane, and F. Burbidge, all three commemorated in Prowse's well-known poem on Alfred Mynn, written in 1861 :—

You may praise the pluck of Burbidge, as he plays an uphill match ;  
You may thunder cheers to Miller for a famous running catch :  
You may join with me in wishing that the Oval once again  
Shall resound with hearty plaudits to the praise of Mr. Lane.

Miller's is one of the great figures in Surrey cricket : he played for the county for sixteen years, 1851–1867, and was a most inspiring captain. As a batsman he was a brilliant driver, especially on the off-side, and he was unsurpassed as a fieldsman at long-leg and cover. Like their captain, both Burbidge and Lane were renowned for their fielding, the former at point being unsurpassed until the "Coroner" came on the scene. Caffyn tells how in one Surrey v. Notts match, when fielding close up in that position, he was very badly hit on the head and knocked almost senseless, but "refused to leave his post, and made several magnificent catches in the same innings." He was a splendid batsman, who could hit or defend at will, and like his captain twice exceeded the century, a feat still sufficiently rare in those days.

C. G. Lane was truly Surrey born, to wit, at the parsonage which overlooked the Oval. He got into the Westminster Eleven when only thirteen years old, and was in it for five years, at a time when that school was exceptionally strong. He was in the Oxford Eleven three years and captain of it in 1859, and also rowed in the Oxford boat in the spring of his last two years, winning in 1859, when the Cambridge boat sank. A fine figure of a man, full 6 feet in height, his style at the wicket was upright and commanding ; indeed, *Scores and Biographies* refers to him as "the model of a batsman." Daft describes him as "one of the best amateur bats I ever saw," and it is to be remembered that his

memory extended from Alfred Mynn to Lionel Palairet. Caffyn goes one further, and says that no man in England was a finer player to fast bowling than Lane, and that he was a positive bugbear to John Jackson of Notts, then the greatest fast bowler in England.

In 1859 the amateurs were reinforced by another fine player, Edward Dowson, the father of the famous Harrow and Cambridge cricketer, E. M. A Salopian himself, Dowson owed much to training and practice with the Walker brothers at Southgate. His was not a particularly taking style, but he had fine defence and great determination. In his very first match against All England he practically won the game for his county with the splendid double of 80 and 36. In a most interesting interview, included in "Old Ebor's" *Old English Cricketers*, Dowson informs us that throughout his career with Surrey he and the amateurs with him received not one penny for their expenses: "wherever we went we paid for everything out of our own pockets—railway fares and hotel bills included."

Let us now clear the stage for the professionals; and a memorable band they are. "If Surrey ever possessed a finer player than William Caffyn," writes Dick Daft in 1893, "I never saw him." He was an excellent fielder, and, says W. G., worth playing in any eleven for his bowling alone; but it was his batting that impressed his contemporaries most. Though not a big man, he was a most brilliant hitter, full of style and wrist, and his glory, like Beldham's, was the cut. Caffyn played for Surrey regularly from 1849 to 1863, when he went to Australia with Parr's team and stayed there for seven years, partly as a professional coach at Melbourne and Sydney, and partly as a hairdresser in the latter place. His all-round record for Surrey is unrivalled, except, perhaps, by George Lohmann. His greatest bowling feats were his 7 wickets for 7 runs in 24 overs against Kent in 1862, and his 8 for 36 for South v. North in 1857. His highest score was 157 against Sixteen of Cambridge University in '59, but probably his finest innings was his 102, which clearly won Surrey the victory in the first of the revived games between the county and the full strength of All England. To Caffyn, as to many of the Oval's favourites, fame brought its peculiar terms of endearment, in his case "Terrible Billy," or "The Surrey Pet."

Next to Caffyn must surely be rated Julius Cæsar, that name so serviceable to "Bunny" Steele in his arguments with his sister-in-law, Mrs. Nathaniel. A Godalming man, Cæsar came into the Surrey Eleven in his twentieth year in 1849, and for eighteen years played regularly for his county as well as for the All-England Eleven. He was a small man, but a great natural sportsman, a first-class shot, and, like George Tarrant, the famous Cambridgeshire fast bowler, an adept with the gloves. Curiously enough, however, he was a very nervous little man, who hated sleeping by himself in any

strange hotel, and suffered from the chronic delusion that any failure with the bat was bound to involve his being dropped out of the Surrey side; of that there could never have been very much chance, for from the first he showed himself a most gifted batsman. Despite his lack of inches, he was a most determined and brilliant driver, especially good at using his feet to get to slow bowling and drive it at the pitch. He was also a fine leg-hitter, and one of the first to make experiments with the "pull." Cæsar's most famous innings was possibly his 101 for England against Kent in '53, but he twice got over 100 for his county, and was top scorer of the match when he first appeared for the Players at Lord's in 1851.

Third of the Surrey professionals of the period, and perhaps greatest, having regard to his permanent influence on the game, comes H. H. Stephenson. There have been very few men in the game's history comparable with him as an all-round player, while as a professional coach his reputation has yet to be rivalled. As a wicket-keeper he was quite first-rate, and probably only the fact that he was contemporary with Lockyer prevented him from being first choice in England for that position. As a batsman he had a very strong and straight defence and fine driving powers, especially on the on-side, but it was his bowling during the few years when he was at his best with the ball that has really left a mark on cricket history. He was, as Caffyn says, practically the pioneer of fast break-back bowling, a style virtually unknown in the round-arm days: as a matter of fact it was the great Australian bowlers of the early teams who really opened the eyes of English cricketers to what could be done in this respect, and it is permissible to suggest that these men took their inspiration from Stephenson, when, in 1861, he captained the first English team to visit Australia. As a man he was a most lovable character, and it was indeed a lucky day for Uppingham when, after nineteen years' service to Surrey, he went to that school as professional coach. His fame there is almost apocryphal; to his normal duties he in time accumulated those of purveyor to the youth of Uppingham of almost every commodity that life might require. A legend has it that so absolute was his authority in his latter days that he could enter any classroom in mid-session and hale away the reluctant classic with the simple formula, "Mr. —, I want you!" Be that as it may, the tree was certainly known by its fruits, for five years after his arrival at the school the Cambridge Eleven contained no fewer than five Uppingham names—Lucas, D. Q. Steel, W. S. Patterson, Luddington, and Schultz.

In the earlier years of their great revival Surrey had two most excellent bowlers in Tom Sherman and William Martingell. The former came of cricketing stock, his father and uncle having both been famous players in the first quarter of that century: he bowled



very fast and straight at a good length, and in 1854 captured 180 wickets for 5 apiece. Martingell, though Surrey born, had a professional engagement under Fuller Pilch for a year or two, and actually played for Kent; but he returned to his native county, and did splendid work for them with his rather fast bowling working in from leg. He and George Brockwell, the latter an uncle of that splendid batsman, "Billy," were the two first ground bowlers engaged at the Oval.

As these two fine bowlers dropped out their places were taken by George Griffith and Tom Sewell. Sewell was always called "Young Tom," to distinguish him from his father, whose picture appears in the All-England Eleven of '47, and who for many years was a regular umpire at the Oval: he was a fine fast bowler and a clean hard-hitting bat, who sometimes made big partnerships for the first wicket with Miller. But good player though Sewell was, he was not of George Griffith's calibre. Not without cause has the poet sung,

If George Griffith gets a loose one, he will send it far away,

for by common consent he was the hardest hitter known until the time of C. I. Thornton. Caffyn considered him the best left-handed batsman there had been, with the possible exception of Felix. His best performance was his 89 and 142 against Sussex in 1863, but his scoring throughout the fifteen years he played for the county was consistently high. As a bowler he was, for most of his time, fast round-arm, and on certain wickets his bowling was about as nasty as anything that can be imagined. Between 1856 and 1871, at a time, it will be remembered, when county fixtures were still relatively scarce, he captured 600 wickets for Surrey. In his later years he took to bowling lobs, with considerable success. Three times in his career he bowled unchanged throughout a county match.

Of three other Surrey players I must speak, Jupp and the brothers T. and R. Humphrey. T. Humphrey played from 1864 to 1871, but was then replaced as Jupp's partner by R. Humphrey. With Jupp he formed for some years the most famous opening pair in England, the veritable prototype of Abel and Brockwell, Hayward and Hobbs. Six times did they together put up over 100 for the first wicket, a then quite exceptional feat. Jupp, who played twenty seasons for Surrey, scored a dozen hundreds in county games, and for fifteen years (1865-1880) represented the Players.

Both were exceptionally small men, Humphrey being 5 feet 4 inches and Jupp but 2 inches taller. The former was an attractive, wristy player, excelling in cutting and off-side play, but the latter was very solid, and possessed an unwearyed defence with a penchant for the old-fashioned under-leg stroke. Hence we may interpret their nicknames, "The Pocket Hercules" and "Young Stonewall." In their different styles these two did as much as any pair for their county, at a time when Surrey had

by general consent the finest side in England ; and when at last Jupp dropped out of the team, he had seen its star set for a season, though destined ere long to rise again under the inspiration of John Shuter.

One story of Jupp, borrowed from Lord Harris's book, and I must end this summary review of a great eleven. Like the most famous of all cricketers, he had a rooted objection to leaving his wicket, if by hook or by crook he could stay there. One day he was playing in a country match at his native place, Dorking, and had the misfortune to be clean bowled first ball. Without moving a muscle of his face he replaced the bails, and prepared to bat again. "Ain't you going out, Juppy?" asked the opposing captain. "No," said Jupp, "not at Dorking," and he didn't!

#### CAMBRIDGESHIRE.

##### *Hayward and Carpenter.*

The modern cricketer may well find it surprising to hear that for some years in the sixties Cambridgeshire were among the strongest counties in England ; but such was indeed the fact. In A. J. (or, as he was generally called, "Ducky") Diver, they had an excellent all-round player who formed one of Stephenson's American Eleven; in John Smith, the fastest outfielder in England; in Tarrant, a bowler who for speed and destructiveness ranked second only to John Jackson ; and in Thomas Hayward and Robert Carpenter such a pair of batsmen as no other county could claim.

It is interesting that these three last names should, forty years later, have again become almost household words in cricket. The Cambridge bowler was, so far as I know, not related to the famous Australian and Middlesex player, but Thomas Hayward junior was the senior's nephew, while Herbert Carpenter was Robert's son.

These two very great players would, with Richard Daft, have been for some years first choice as batsmen for an England side, but in physique and style they were curiously dissimilar. No one, in Daft's opinion, with the exception of Arthur Shrewsbury, rose to such heights of batsmanship from such slender physical resources as did Hayward. He was rather below medium height and very spare of frame, weighing little more than 9 stone when he first began to play in big matches ; added to this, he was never blessed with good health, or with the happy temperament that so often goes along with it. He looked, indeed, but a frail figure as he stood at the wicket, holding the bat very lightly in his hands and at the end of its handle, and yet in all England there was no more graceful or masterly batsman, with the possible exception of Dick Daft himself. Hayward was essentially a forward player, with something

of the pendulum correctness of swing that Pileh possessed. He was a beautiful off-driver, but his real forte was his on-side play, and especially his ability to force the ball off the leg-stump and his legs, between mid-on and short-leg, a stroke which his nephew played to perfection, and surely must have inherited. In spite of his natural disadvantages, Hayward was at his very best on fiery wickets, when his ability to keep down the rising ball was most marked. One weak point in his armour must be mentioned—he was a deplorable judge of a run. Like the younger Tom, he was a more than useful medium-paced bowler, and an excellent field at cover. His long scores are innumerable. In 1859 he scored 220, playing as a given man for the Gentlemen of Cambridgeshire against the University, and twice he obtained a century for the Players against the Gentlemen at Lord's, an example which his nephew was to follow at an interval of thirty years.

Bob Carpenter was a batsman of very different method. He was pre-eminently a back player, but he combined with his strength of defence great quickness of foot and driving power. He was at his very best against slow bowling, which he would punish unmercifully; in fact, he always liked to “nurse” a slow bowler in order to make the most out of him. There was no harder driver in England in the sixties. He would come down the wicket and hit “like a horse kicking,” while he also favoured the genuine leg-hit, though in this respect he resembled the Hon. C. G. Lyttelton rather than Daft, and tended to lift the ball. He, like Hayward, twice exceeded the century against the Gentlemen, but at the Oval, and not Lord's. Carpenter was probably the most famous of all the members of the United Eleven, and made many runs in their great matches with the A.E.E. For a time he acted as a coach at Marlborough College, and within one generation no school can have enjoyed the services of two greater players than Carpenter and Stephenson.

Of the two Cambridgeshire bowlers, Tarrant and Buttress, the latter was undoubtedly the greater; indeed, for some years he was probably as good as anyone in England. Unfortunately, a “failing for pints,” as Mr. Ashley-Cooper expresses it, made his form uncertain, and sadly curtailed a great career, for Buttress was no more than forty-one when he died. He bowled medium pace with a very big leg-break—indeed, he has sometimes been called “the father of leg-break bowling,” and on a wicket that gave him any assistance he was most deadly. To play forward to him was generally to edge the ball to one of his slips, and if that method of attack failed, he would as like as not bowl the batsman clean round his legs. Buttress, like Bickley of Notts, was always in great request to play for local sides against the A.E.E., and his success in these matches was quite phenomenal; on one occasion he took

7 wickets for 5 runs against this representative side. As a batsman Buttress was little more than a joke, and it is recorded that once, when his turn came to bat, he was found perched in a tree overlooking the ground. When remonstrated with he replied, "What's the good of me goin' in? If I miss 'em I'm out, and if I hit 'em I'm out. Let's start the next innings!" By trade Buttress was a lamplighter, by predilection probably an actor. Certainly he was never so happy as when making use of his considerable skill as a ventriloquist and frightening old ladies into the belief that there was a cat under the seat in their railway carriage.

Short as was Buttress's life, it exceeded Tarrant's by ten years, and here again it is sad to record that the bowler was his own worst enemy. Indeed, Tarrant's cannot have been a lovable character. Success turned his head, and he could never stand punishment, but when things were going his way he was a terrible bowler to face. He took a longish and very lively run, and put all he knew into every ball. Bowling round the wicket, he worked in a good deal from leg, and very often, when he did not frighten a batsman out, he would bowl him off his legs. For a few years he, Jackson, and Willsher were incomparably the best fast bowlers in England.

#### YORKSHIRE.

*George Freeman and Tom Emmett.*

The County Championship, as we understand it to-day, is a thing of comparatively recent growth. There was no official classification of counties into first and second class until 1890, and no accepted method of "point-counting" until 1888; but in 1872 definite legislation took place to determine the vexed principles of individual qualification, and this fact alone serves to show the predominating importance which county games were by that time assuming. The process would assuredly have been more rapid had it not been for the deplorable dispute, eventually amounting to a definite schism, that for some years in the sixties split the body of professional cricket in twain. To this there were various contributing causes—the inevitable rivalry between the two great touring elevens, the resentment of many of the northern players at the selection of H. H. Stephenson to captain the Australian side of 1862, and the ill-feeling, culminating in an open and violent quarrel between Notts and Surrey. Suffice it to say that by 1867 the rift had become a rent, North and South were not on speaking terms, the great match between them had perforce lapsed, and what was virtually a death-blow had been dealt to the two touring elevens by a secession of nearly all the best southern players from their ranks, to form the United South of England Eleven.

During the opening years of this dispute no county suffered more grievously than Yorkshire, but as practically nothing has yet been said of cricket in that shire, we must hark back for a little in order to bring this part of the history up to date. There is plenty of evidence of cricket being played at an early date up and down the land of broad acres, at the capital itself, at Ripon, Halifax, Doncaster, Leeds, but above all at Sheffield, which has always been the real focus. What matter if the occasion for its introduction there seems a little odd when we read that in 1751 the Sheffield authorities "engaged professional cricketers to amuse the populace and draw them away from cock-fighting"? A start once made, the enthusiasm was not lacking, and the matches between Sheffield and Nottingham from 1771 to 1860 were the real "Test Matches" north of the Trent. There were three successive grounds opened in the town—first the Darnall Ground in 1822, which five years later was the venue for the first of the three "Round-Arm Experimental Matches"; next the Hyde Park Ground (1826), on which 16,000 people assembled to watch the A.E.E. in the opening year of their existence; and lastly the famous Bramall Lane Ground, on which the first match was played in 1855.

Yorkshire first took the field as a County Eleven in 1833, against Norfolk. That was no doubt due to the fact that the great Fuller Pilch—at that time the leading light of Norfolk—had learnt to handle bat and ball as a boy in Sheffield. For the next thirty years county matches were occasionally played, but there was no central authority charged with the selection and management of the county sides. Nevertheless there were fine players in the Yorkshire ranks, ranging from Marsden ("at cricket he's nature's perfection") and Dearman in the thirties, through H. Sampson and Chatterton, to the three bowlers, Hodgson, Iddison, and Atkinson, and the great batsman, George Anderson, in the late fifties. In 1863 the decisive step was taken and a County Club formed, but unfortunately the good work was almost stifled in its infancy by the aforementioned schism between the North and the South professionals, which, throughout 1865 and 1866, kept Anderson and several other of their most prominent players entirely off the field.

At last the breach was healed, and in 1867 the White Rose bloomed as it never had before, and with seven wins out of seven county matches played proved clearly its title to the premiership among the counties. It is not a little significant that this, the opening year of its triumph, should have witnessed practically the first appearance of George Freeman and Tom Emmett, and thus given an earnest of that unfailing stream of great bowlers with which Yorkshire has been blessed and which, more than anything else, has made so proud a record of her cricket history.

George Freeman virtually played only five years in the County Eleven, retiring after the end of the 1871 season to take up a lucrative business, but in that short time he won for himself the unquestioned title of the best fast bowler in England; indeed, W. G., with all his fifty years' experience, states unequivocally that he was the best he ever played. If figures go for anything, his are surely convincing enough: in those years he played in but 26 county matches, but captured in them 194 wickets for under 10 each. In pace he was not quite of the extreme school, but his accuracy and deadly off-break were unrivalled for a bowler that could not be termed even fast medium. It is delicious to read his own statement that he always preferred bowling on the Oval because there the wicket was perfect and he could regulate his breaks, while the rougher grounds were apt to upset his calculations. But for his habitual modesty Freeman would have been one of only four players to appear both for the Amateurs and Professionals in the great match at Lord's, for more than ten years after his retirement from county cricket he was asked to represent the Gentlemen, but declined on the grounds that his form hardly justified the compliment.

Tom Emmett is one of the most attractive figures in all the great gallery of Yorkshire players; never was there a man of higher vitality, of more inexhaustible good humour. For twenty years he was the life and soul of every side on which he played, and though his figures cannot, of course, compare with George Hirst's in a different era, it is probable that not even that hero did more for Yorkshire than did Tom. Left-handed both with bat and ball, he had a good defence, and was a powerful driver on more orthodox lines generally than most left-handers; but bowling was his forte. Though he probably bowled more wides than any other great bowler who ever lived, he also bowled a more difficult ball; and W. G. has admitted that even when well set on a good wicket he never felt secure against him. The ball in question was the one that pitched on or about the batsman's legs or leg-stump and whipped back to hit the off-bail—all at a great pace. For some indecipherable reason its author always called this particular delivery a "sostenuter." On his best days Emmett was virtually unplayable, and the wonderful performances standing to his name are legion. Most striking of all, perhaps, is his 16 wickets for 38 *v.* Cambridge shire in 1869 (the greatest capture that has ever fallen to a Yorkshireman in a single match); but Surrey perhaps suffered from him most, witness such analyses as 6 for 7 in their first meeting in '67, and 8 for 22 fourteen years later, a spell of bowling during which at one time he took 5 for 0! Emmett went to Australia three times and to America once. Countless good stories are told about him, centring for the most part round some example of his own exceptional gift for repartee. Those who want to get to know

him as a man and a cricketer must go to "Old Ebor's" two books, in which the great figures of the old Yorkshire players are, hand and heart, so happily enshrined.

Freeman's retirement in 1872 fortunately coincided with the appearance of another absolutely first-rate fast bowler in the person of Allan Hill, who for a dozen years did splendid work for the county, and was, with the exception of Dick Barlow, the last man to do the hat-trick in *Gentlemen v. Players* until his compatriot, E. R. Wilson, did the same in the Scarborough matches of 1919. Then there was George Ulyett, of whom we shall have to speak later, a very great player indeed, who came out as a bowler, but soon developed such batting powers that he came rather to keep his bowling in reserve for emergencies. For twenty years ('73-'93) he was the backbone of the side and a regular choice for the representative elevens. Of batsmen I can do no more than mention John Thewlis and Luke Greenwood in the sixties and Ephraim Lockwood of the next decade. No cricketer can have had a much more sensational debut than did the latter at the Oval in 1868. Wired for from Yorkshire, he went to the wicket a raw lad, in very short, tight trousers and an amazing check shirt. The Cockneys of Kennington were tickled to death at his appearance, while one of them greeted him in a voice that carried to the pitch: "Why, he's more fit to eat a penny cake than play cricket!" But before he was out the laugh was on the other side: 176 did he and his Uncle Thewlis make, of which his share was 91. "Old Mary," as he was always called, developed into one of the most brilliant batsmen in England, and by general agreement his cutting has never been excelled.

When once the organizing agency of the County Club was firmly established in Yorkshire, it is not surprising that the talent at their command was quick to make itself felt. Three times in four years—in '67, '68 and '70—were they, on results, the best eleven in England, and though they subsequently suffered some vicissitudes of fortune, they, Notts, and Surrey can fairly claim to have monopolized the cricket supremacy throughout the next half-century. Both the northern counties were recruited from men who had had their early cricket training under the industrial conditions at which we glanced earlier in this chapter. Though experience has proved the advantage of having at least one amateur in a county eleven, for many years Yorkshire and Notts consistently took the field with none but paid players.

#### MIDDLESEX AND GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

In marked contrast to this was the case of two other counties which about this time began to claim the interest, support, and

finally the enthusiasm of the public. Both the Middlesex and Gloucestershire Elevens were almost exclusively amateur in composition, and it was undoubtedly a great day for cricket when the former, two years after their formation as a County Club, led the field at the end of the season, and when Gloucester followed suit in 1873. Middlesex are to-day so intimately associated with Lord's that it may come as a surprise to many to know that that connection dates back no farther than 1877. The first real home of the County Eleven was the old Cattle Market Ground at Islington, though for some years previous to its opening the private ground of the Walker family at Southgate had served as a focus for the cricket talent of the county. It was in 1864 that a County Club was definitely established, and it is interesting to notice that the chair was taken by the Hon. Robert Grimston, as it had been on a similar occasion just twenty years previously by his inseparable associate, Fred Ponsonby, at the formation of the Surrey County Club.

Unfortunately the encroachment of builders cut short the tenure of their first ground to a space of but four seasons, and though moves were subsequently made to the Athletic Ground at Lillie Bridge and again to Prince's, Chelsea, in 1872, the uncertainty and inconvenience involved in these migrations reacted upon the support accorded to the club. But there is no doubt that at their best the Middlesex Eleven of the late sixties and early seventies were a very hot proposition. In G. Howitt they had a very good fast left-hand bowler, for whom the county of his birth, Notts, had not been able to find room, and in Tom Hearne one of the best all-rounders of the day. A constant member of the United Eleven, Hearne put the seal on his fame by an innings of 122 not out for the Players against the Gentlemen in 1866, and for the next ten years was one of the backbones of the county side.

But the bulwark of the county's strength was provided by her amateurs, and above all by the Walkers. Few families, with the exception of the Graces, have had so wonderful a cricket history, and those who wish to read of it in detail can do so in Mr. W. A. Bettesworth's most interesting book, *The Walkers of Southgate*. Their feats with bat and ball are numberless, and the greatest of the brotherhood, V. E., was responsible for one that is perhaps, even now, the most remarkable ever performed in a great match. In 1859, playing for England against the redoubtable Surrey Eleven at the Oval, V. E. Walker took all 10 wickets in Surrey's first innings for 74 runs, and followed this up by scoring 108 not out in England's second innings. Both E. M. Grace and the Doctor have made a century and taken all 10 wickets in the same match, but as their opponents were, in the one case, the Gentlemen of Kent, in the other Oxford University, their performances cannot



quite be ranked with the Middlesex man's, which to the modern reader may seem all the more remarkable in view of the fact that Walker bowled lobbs, and at the other end was no less a bowler than John Jackson. As a lob-bowler V. E. may not have been of the same class as Clarke, but he was probably the best amateur exponent of the art who ever lived. He bowled round the wicket with a fair amount of spin from leg, and varied his pace within very wide limits ; but what made his bowling particularly formidable was his own amazing catching and stopping of everything hit back within—and often seemingly outside of—his reach. No finer fieldsman to his own bowling has ever stepped on to a cricket ground. Three times in his career did he take all 10 wickets in a first-class match—a record quite without parallel—and he was only baulked from the same feat on another occasion by the veriest jot and tittle of the law. It was in a Middlesex *v.* Sussex match in 1864, on the old County Ground at the Cattle Market, Islington. At the end of the second innings Walker had apparently taken all 10 wickets for 62 runs, and was overwhelmed with congratulations as he left the field ; but it was later discovered that a Sussex batsman had been technically run out instead of stumped, owing to the fact that he had just touched a ball of V. E.'s before it rebounded from the wicket-keeper's pads on to the wicket, with the batsman well out of his ground.

Yet great player as V. E. was, it is possible that I. D. has really a larger hold upon the memories of his contemporaries ; and when two days after his death the flags at the Eton and Harrow match were seen to be floating half-mast, it seemed but a fitting tribute to one to whom Harrow and Middlesex cricket owed so much. He was the natural successor to Fred Ponsonby and Bob Grimston as guide, philosopher, and friend to generations of Harrow cricketers. He founded, in 1870, the famous Harrow Wanderers Club, and devoted all his spare time to the coaching of the Harrow Elevens. As captain for many years of the Middlesex side, he would have been worth his place, if he had never taken a wicket or made a run ; but he was a good under-hand bowler, though condemned to play second fiddle to V. E., and as a batsman one of the most brilliant off-side players that ever lived. His speciality was the "Harrow-drive," that fascinating shot, now hardly ever seen, which hits the short half-volley skimming over cover's head to the boundary. In 1868 he played an innings of 165 for the Gentlemen *v.* the Players which is historic, but probably the most sensational feat of his whole career came fifteen years later, when he and Alfred Lyttelton scored 341 for the second wicket against Gloucestershire, actually adding 226 after luncheon in one hour and three-quarters.

His brother, R. D., was also a brilliant batsman, and the last man to appear five times in the University match. His connection

with Middlesex cricket is the longest of all, for though born as far back as 1842, he remained President of the Middlesex County Club until the year of his death, 1922, when there thus passed from the scene of their greatest triumph and happiness the last of the brothers who had shepherded their county through all its manifold vicissitudes, from its cradle at Southgate, its boyhood at Islington, to its splendid maturity as champions at the home of the game. One peculiarity of I. D. and R. D. must be noted before we pass on : throughout their long careers, and though constantly batting against the fastest of bowlers on the then very fiery wickets at Lord's, both brothers habitually refused to wear pads of any sort, and, more remarkable still, their wonderful eye as racquet-players saved them from ever paying serious penalty for their temerity.

In B. B. Cooper, A. W. T. Daniel, and C. F. Buller, Middlesex had for a few years three other first-rate batsmen, all of whom for various reasons were lost to cricket much earlier than could have been anticipated. Buller in the sixties was unquestionably one of the best players in England, and in point of style was unsurpassed. He was, says Wisden in his biographical notice, possibly the handsomest man the cricket field has ever known.

Considerable interest was occasioned when in a match in 1923 it was reported that "the Somerset amateurs accounted for all 20 wickets of their opponents, Gloucestershire, while the latter had, and have always, to rely on an exclusively professional attack." It was enough to make the early Gloucester cricketers turn in their graves. That county had made a start in the cricket world in 1868, but it was another two years before the energy of Mr. Grace senior really got a County Club going and embarked upon a small programme of first-class matches. The result was a new phenomenon in the history of cricket, a purely amateur eleven proving themselves able to hold their own with such long-established professional sides as Surrey and Notts : indeed, taking the decade of the seventies as a whole, it is probable that the county of the Graces, as it soon came to be called, could point to a record second to none. The year 1876 was not unnaturally one of great success, for the Champion was in his very finest form, and his two brothers also full of runs. The trio were reinforced in batting by Messrs. Moberly, Townsend, and Gilbert, while in J. A. Bush they had the best amateur wicket-keeper of the day. The bowling depended too much on W. G. and G. F., who together took 84 wickets out of the 128 that fell ; but R. F. Miles, a slow left-hander, who, according to the Champion, was the first man to exploit the off-theory, gave very useful help. The next year saw them once more Champion County, with double victories over Notts, Surrey, and Sussex, and the best of the argument with Yorkshire. Midwinter, the Australian pro-

fessional, had now joined their ranks and materially strengthened the attack. This was the high-water mark of Gloucestershire cricket, and never since has the county been able to lay claim to Championship honours.

#### LANCASHIRE.

The end of this decade saw the arrival of the last member of what has ever since been the great trinity of the North. As for many years Yorkshire cricket was synonymous with Sheffield, so was that of Lancashire with Manchester. In the forties and fifties there was plenty of good club cricket and many good cricketers in that county, but the County Club was not formed until 1864, and for some years its progress was slow and its programme modest. But in 1871 two outstanding players were unearthed in Barlow and Watson, and ten years later Lancashire outdistanced all rivals. What A. J. Webbe was to Middlesex, all that was A. N. Hornby to the northern county. When he won his place in the Harrow Eleven of 1864 he weighed, Mr. Ashley-Cooper tells us, less than 6 stone, but there have been few more determined or dashing batsmen among amateur cricketers, and never a more whole-hearted and inspiring captain, or, in his prime, a more brilliant field. He was probably the champion short-runner of all history, and though Barlow used to say of him, "First he runs you out of breath, then he runs you out, and then he gives you a sovereign," W. G. has paid tribute to his extraordinary judgment in this respect. For many years he and Barlow were the most formidable opening county pair in England. Of the latter something must be said hereafter; he is to be rated among the very best all-rounders who have ever played.

In William McIntyre and Watson, the latter a Scot by birth, the county had two very hard-working and successful professional bowlers, who were well supported first by W. S. Patterson and Arthur Appleby, and later by the redoubtable A. G. Steel. Appleby was a very fine fast left-hand bowler, who made a sensational debut for the Gentlemen at Lord's in 1867, bowling unchanged and taking 8 wickets for 65 runs. Patterson and Watson were both on the slow side of medium, while McIntyre was really fast, so that the attack did not lack variety; and from 1877 onwards it was supported behind the wicket by Pilling, who has possibly had no superior in the history of the game except Blackham.

The advent of Lancashire as a power in the land constitutes a definite milestone in county cricket, for with it is completed the select band of counties out of whose keeping the Championship has never passed, with the single exception of 1911, when F. R. Foster led Warwickshire to victory, and 1936 when Derbyshire won under A. W. Richardson.

## CHAPTER XI

### AMATEUR CRICKET: 1840-1862

#### THE SCHOOLS.

UNTIL comparatively recent times, Eton, Harrow, and Winchester had no serious rivals amongst the schools, and with their week at Lord's constituting, down to its demise in 1854, the one great public-school festival of the year, it is not surprising that, so long as it lasted, places in the University Elevens should have been to a great extent the prerogative of the triumvirate, and especially of those who had already caught the eye of the *cognoscenti* at Lord's. From the list of "blues" contributed to *Wisden* I have compiled the following summary of "blues" from the first match in 1827 down to the year in question, 1854:—

	Oxford.	Cambridge.
Eton .. .. .	24	39
Harrow .. .. .	20	14
Winchester .. .. .	33	10
Rugby .. .. .	12	11
Westminster .. .. .	7	2
Charterhouse .. .. .	2	3
Tonbridge .. .. .	3	1
Shrewsbury .. .. .	1	2
Marlborough .. .. .	1	—
Cheltenham .. .. .	—	1
Uppingham .. .. .	—	1
Twenty-one other schools ..	8	21
"Privately" educated ..	5	13

It will thus be seen that out of the 234 awarded in this period, no less than 140 fell to Eton, Harrow, and Winchester.

There is, however, in *Scores and Biographies* record of occasional games by other schools, and though inter-school matches were very intermittent, there was no doubt a certain amount of cricket against local club teams. In 1841 Charterhouse played Addiscombe, and two years later Harrow met Haileybury, though the fixture was not repeated till 1857; in the forties the M.C.C. were sending sides against Rugby and Westminster, whilst IZ., soon after their formation in 1845, played both the latter in addition to Eton and Harrow. In 1850 Westminster met Charterhouse on Vincent Square, and in 1852 they played and lost to Rugby, though Walter

Fellows took 16 wickets for them in the match. But such matches seem to have been very exceptional throughout the first half of the century, and it was not until 1855 that Rugby met Marlborough in the first game of the series, and a year later that they met Cheltenham. The Cheltenham-Clifton match began as a regular fixture in 1872, but Repton had encountered Uppingham seven years earlier.

Pycroft, in his *Oxford Memories*, says that there were no school professionals in the thirties. This is not strictly accurate, for Mr. Ashley-Cooper has discovered that a professional bowler was employed at Harrow as early as 1823, and Eton was probably not very long in following suit. Nevertheless, it seems true that for the first half of the century the great schools relied mainly on amateur coaching, and herein Harrow, with Bob Grimston and Fred Ponsonby as their mentors, were singularly fortunate. Among the first of the great line of amateur coaches at Eton, of whom we have definite record, are G. R. Dupuis and R. A. H. Mitchell, who joined the staff in 1866. The Wykehamists, to judge from Fred Gale's reminiscences, had at an early stage evolved for themselves a rigorous system of practice, and the institution of "bartering," or organized fielding practice, was already in existence in the thirties—the work, so he says, of Lord Cardwell when a prefect there. Probably the juniors at most schools were but little catered for, their chief business being to fag at the practices of their lords and masters.

By the fifties, however, public-school cricket was becoming far more systematized, and professional coaches were increasingly common. At many schools the season commenced in March, or at latest April, and this gave them the chance of engaging some of the best cricketers of the day, at least for the first month or six weeks of the season, before they went on to coaching engagements at Oxford and Cambridge, or joined the ranks of the travelling elevens. Thus old William Lillywhite came to Winchester in 1851, whilst his son Jem was at Westminster in that and the two preceding years, when the school had fine sides. Subsequently he did duty at Eton, Marlborough, and Cheltenham, where he became a permanency, and did much for the school's cricket. His other son, John, was for a time at Rugby, where he was succeeded by "Ducky" Diver. William Caffyn did duty at Winchester from 1858 to 1861, and subsequently at several other schools, including Wellington and Haileybury. George Parr and Richard Daft were both engaged at Harrow in 1860–1861, when they were succeeded by John Lillywhite.

Eton had jumped away with a lead from Harrow in the earliest matches of the series, but the period which we are now studying saw the tables turned. Thanks to Emilius Bayley's century and

the fine work of two famous fast bowlers, Marcon and Yonge, the Light Blues had won in 1841 by the still record margin of an innings and 175 runs. In 1844 they began a sequence of four heavy victories, for the last three of which they owed most to E. W. Blore, whose slow bowling was extraordinarily successful, and accounted for 33 Harrow and 35 Winchester wickets. But in the twenty years from 1848 Eton could only win twice, and even the presence of two such cricketers as R. A. H. Mitchell and C. G. Lyttelton in the late fifties could not stem the tide of Harrow success.

The truth was that Harrow at this time were very rich in cricketers. In 1849 appeared Reginald Hankey, destined to become one of the best batsmen in the land, and in the next year A. H. Walker began that great chapter of family history which ran through the next dozen years. In 1855 the Dark Blues discovered three fine bowlers in Henry Arkwright, later one of the best slow bowlers in England, and the two Langs, of whom Bob for a few years was reported faster than even Jackson and Tarrant; while at the end of the period came Daniel, a dashing batsman who made a century against Eton in 1860, and C. F. Buller, whose fame really belongs to the next decade. When we remember that Harrow in the forties was really a very small school, and that in 1848, when they began their series of victories, they did not number much more than 100 boys against Eton's 600, their performance for the next twenty years is truly astonishing.

Lowth had been the great Wykehamical figure in our first period, but he was soon succeeded by another almost more remarkable. V. C. Smith first played for Winchester in 1839, two years later played a great part in defeating the very strong Eton Eleven that had destroyed Harrow by the record margin, was still captaining Winchester, at the age of twenty-two, in 1843, and then played four years for Oxford. His nine appearances at Lord's in these games is, I believe, a record not paralleled until E. M. Dowson. Winchester fully held her own with both her rivals in the early fifties, and E. B. Trevilian's scores of 1852—65 and 48 against Harrow and 126 against Eton—are as good as anything till then recorded in the match. In 1854 Dr. Moberly, uneasy as to the effect of this London festival upon the Wykehamists, put an end to their participation in it, a decision that at the time roused the liveliest controversy, and was until his dying day denounced by that keenest of Wykehamical cricketers, the "Old Buffer," though who shall now say that Winchester has not been the happier for it? For their last two years in London the school had one of the most successful bowlers of their history in A. J. Bramly; and, thanks largely to his exertions, they were victors in the last match that they ever played at Lord's.

Of the matches played between the Schools down to 1854 Winchester won 11 against Harrow's 13, 10 against Eton's 14, whilst the match with the latter in 1845 was a tie ; after thirty-one meetings between Eton and Harrow, the former held a lead of five. In the thirties, Pycroft recalls, the Wykehamists were the best players of the day at Oxford, and for several years they used to play the rest of the University, and once actually met the Combined Universities at Lord's. At first the Schools Week was a thoroughly domestic event, attended only by those most nearly concerned, but gradually it developed into the function with which we are now familiar, and as early as 1861 *Bell's Life* records that there were 7,000 persons on the ground on the first day of Eton *v.* Harrow, and "700 carriages of the nobility and gentry of England, filled with the rank, the fashion, and the beauty of the country."

#### THE UNIVERSITIES.

It is a curious fact that no one has as yet set himself to write the detailed history of the Oxford University Cricket Club, but though Oxford has thereby missed the chance of contemporary evidence of its early years, which in the case of Cambridge was taken and made such good use of by W. J. Ford, yet we can at least count ourselves fortunate to have the admirable chapter in the *Jubilee Book of Cricket*, written by the late Thomas Case, himself a cricket "blue" under R. A. H. Mitchell's captaincy, and for many years president of the O.U.C.C.

Familiar as we are now with the many and luxurious college grounds of Oxford, to say nothing of "the Parks," it is hard for us to visualize the primitive and happy-go-lucky conditions under which the game was long played there. But the fact remains that down to the year 1851 the University Club had no ground whatever that was, properly speaking, their own, and the only genuinely private ground was that belonging to the Bullingdon Club, situated where the barracks now stand, and overlooking that once most depressing vista, the Cowley course of the O.U.G.C. The University ground, if such it may be called, was really that portion of the extensive Cowley Common which had originally been appropriated for their own use by the boys of Magdalen College Choir School, and which had been made over to the Oxford Eleven by the school's headmaster, himself an enthusiastic cricketer. For this reason it was always known as the Magdalen Ground. In 1851 the exigencies of the Enclosure Act forced the question of tenure to an issue, and Convocation took official cognizance for the first time of cricket as a constituent element in University life by buying for £2,000 the ground, or, as it was termed in the act, "*prata quaedam apud Cowley juxta Oxonium in quibus prout hac usque consuetum est pila,*

*vulgo vocata Cricket, sese exerceant Academici juniores.*" The same influence of the Enclosure Act was responsible for forming several college grounds—all on the Cowley side of the town. The Magdalen Ground remained the home of University cricket until the year 1881, when the enterprise of Professor Case, supported, it is pleasant to know, by the famous Dr. Jowett of Balliol, won from Convocation their permission to establish a new University ground in the Parks, a move that at last gave the Dark Blues some of the advantages which their rivals had for many years enjoyed at "Fenner's."

The famous Cambridge ground, rented in 1846 by Fenner from Caius College, was first tenanted by the C.U.C.C., and the lease was not secured by the University Club itself until 1873. The devoted activities of the Rev. A. R. Ward (son of the famous William Ward, and immortalized for his hospitality in the "Bollinger" lyric) followed this up with the erection of the existing pavilion, completed and finally paid for in 1877, thanks to the generosity, among others, of the late King Edward, and to the profitable alliance of the Cricket Club with the C.U.A.C.

At both Universities for the first half of the nineteenth century College cricket was spasmodic and rather primitive. As late as 1875 there were only four private College grounds at Cambridge, of which Jesus was the oldest, and the bulk of College matches were still played in the publicity and rather hazardous interlacing of Parker's Piece. At Oxford the development of College cricket was rather more rapid, but until comparatively recent times such grounds as there were were practically confined to Cowley Common. The distance of these grounds from the centre of the University was no hardship to Oxonians, who, for the most part, regarded the ride out across the fences *en route* as by no means the least enjoyable part of their day.

The truth would seem to be that in the early years of the University match the game at both centres of learning was rather a happy-go-lucky affair. It is astonishing to read that at both Oxford and Cambridge the management of the University Cricket Club was in the hands of a triumvirate of equal powers, each of whom could—and on occasion simultaneously did—act as captain on the field. In the thirties there were no practice nets and no ground staff of expert professionals at all, though subsequently this omission was made good, and in the fifties the pick of the bowling strength of England was to be found doing duty on the University grounds during the opening weeks of the season. For many years there was no distinctive uniform, though later on the Harlequins and Quidnuncs made a gallant attempt to restore the balance by extending their insignia even to the shirts and trousers of their members. Then, again, both Universities suffered severely from a lack of first-class practice matches; there were no county engagements



at all, and though the M.C.C. began their visits to Oxford in 1832 and to Cambridge three years later, a fixture list of three or four matches seems to have been for the next twenty-five years as much as either captain could hope to arrange.

Moreover, it was often difficult for a captain to secure his best eleven for any given match. Some of the University authorities were far from recognizing the importance of the occasion, and G. R. Dupuis recalls how he was refused leave by the Dean of King's to play in a University match on the score that the proper place for a scholar of King's on a Saturday afternoon was in chapel. Even the players themselves seem in some cases to have taken their responsibilities lightly. "Absent 0" was no unknown legend, even in the 'Varsity match, and in the crisis of the 1841 game a certain Peer of the Realm failed to turn up when his turn came to bat in the last innings, and Oxford lost by 8 runs!

Nor did the early University matches attract very much general attention. The attendance at Lord's was small and almost exclusively partisan, and the amount of public interest was reflected in the fact that *Bell's Life*, the leading reporting agency of sport at the time, devoted but four lines to its account of the close and interesting game of 1848. As to the standard of University play in those days it is difficult to judge. Pycroft, writing in the eighties, said that the Oxford Eleven of 1836 contained several men who must have won their "blues" in any year, but there can be little doubt that the average University Eleven down to the sixties would have had no chance whatever against any of the good county sides, and that the number of 'Varsity players for whom places were found in the Gentlemen's Eleven points less to the strength of the Universities than to the weakness of amateur cricket as a whole.

In batting there was not very much defence, and the 'Varsity Elevens were apt to fare badly on difficult grounds, however brilliantly some of them could hit on easy wickets. Thus one of R. A. H. Mitchell's Oxford Elevens made 400 odd runs in an innings on the Magdalen wicket against Grundy and Wootton, only to be bowled out for 70 by the same pair on the more difficult terrain of Lord's. Nevertheless, there were some fine batsmen in both elevens in the first half of the century. In the thirties and forties there were at Cambridge Charles Taylor, Broughton, the famous cover-point, G. J. Boudier, R. T. King, a fine all-round cricketer who clearly won the game in '49, and the Hon. F. Ponsonby, and at Oxford the latter's *fidus Achates*, the Hon. R. Grimston, V. C. Smith, and C. Coleridge. Later there came to Oxford Hankey, C. G. Lane, A. Paine, and Walter Fellows, that terrific and very successful hitter.

Cambridge in the fifties could point to McCormick, a splendid all-round player whose bowling was modelled on Buttress, and

whose batting alone would have brought him to the top of the tree had he not entered the Church and so given up the game when only approaching his prime. Then there was Makinson of Lancashire, for a year or two among the best all-round players in England, whose remarkable double of 95 runs and 8 wickets for 40 settled the match of '56; G. E. Cotterill, a name well known in Scotland's cricket; and a trio who played their last match together in 1864—Marshall, Daniel, and the Hon. C. G. Lyttelton.

But the greatest of all University batsmen for the first half-century of the University match was R. A. H. Mitchell. He obtained his "blue" as a Freshman at Oxford in 1862, and his scores of 37 and 53 against Cambridge were the features of the match. His success, the commanding methods by which it was attained, and his personality and natural capacity for leadership, combined to secure for him the honour of the captaincy in his second year, an office which he held in '63-4-5, leading Oxford to victory in each year, and thus winning for them a lead of one on the general balance of the matches. At this time Mitchell was, in method and execution alike, the finest amateur batsman in England, with the single exception of the Champion, whom, however, he surpassed in style. His influence, both in precept and practice, upon many generations of Eton cricketers is incalculable.

In bowling the matches at the end of the thirties had seen some great work done, for Oxford by the two Wykehamists, Lowth and G. B. Lee, the latter subsequently Warden of the College, and for Cambridge by E. Sayers and Kirwan, though the Etonian never quite found his devastating school form. In 1843 H. E. Moberly took 14 wickets for Oxford, and yet saw his side beaten; and at the end of that decade E. W. Blore's off-breaks for Cambridge and C. F. Willis for Oxford played a big part in the match.

Of the two greatest bowlers of the whole period, the Oxonians, G. E. Yonge and C. D. Marsham, I shall speak in the next section, but as the sixties dawned Cambridge began to enjoy the services of the fastest bowler yet seen in the match, the Harrovian Bob Lang.

The proportion of "extras" to runs from the bat was in the early years of the match very high. In 1836 these were 149, getting on for a third of the aggregate total of runs. This was primarily due to the universal cult for fast bowling, coupled with the rough ground, which made long-stop so arduous and important a post. Hence the fame won by E. S. E. Hartopp, whose long-stopping in '41 probably won Cambridge the match; of C. H. Ridding, who never padded or gloved to the fastest bowling, but met it, like a man and a Briton, with his bare hands and unpadded legs; and of H. M. Marshall, who had to stand the worst bombardment of all, from Lang.

There remains, I think, one more reflection of general interest

concerning the first half-century of University cricket. Admittedly the game was not, for some time, the arduous and specialized business which it has subsequently become, but at least it did not monopolize the energies of its adherents, but gave them scope for distinction in other fields as well. I doubt whether any 'Varsity Eleven in the last sixty years has equalled in scholarship and intellectual distinction the Oxford sides of Pycroft's time, which included seven men of real eminence, among them a subsequent Vice-Chancellor, two Bishops, a Professor of History, and the greatest living authority on Herodotus. Similarly, we are not likely to see repeated Charles Marsham's feat of 1851, when, in addition to his "blue," he won a "double first" in the genuine and original meaning of the term; a first in Lit. Hum., followed immediately by another in Mathematics. D. C. Collins, in 1911, provided us with the last instance of a man in the Boat as well as the Eleven, in these days a very *rara avis*; but in the forties and fifties there were several instances, most notably in 1856, when McCormick and Wingfield (both of the Cambridge Eleven) were No. 6 and cox respectively of the boat. Other examples are provided by the Etonians, M'Niven and Aitken, whilst C. G. Lane of Westminster twice rowed in the Oxford boat, and from it in 1859 saw Cambridge sink at Barnes.

#### THE GENTLEMEN.

The review of the county elevens which we attempted in our last chapter may very well have suggested a great predominance of professional over amateur talent in the "early middle ages," and a glance at the results of the Gentlemen v. Players matches of that epoch will readily confirm that impression. Down to the year 1839 the former could really make no pretence at facing their opponents on equal terms. For the next ten years they really held their own, thanks to Alfred Mynn, Felix, Taylor, Harvey Fellows, and Sir Frederick Bathurst; but then from 1850 to 1865 the Players, assisted by seven consecutive wins of the toss, won every single match except that in 1853, when Bathurst (now appearing for the twentieth time) and Mathew Kempson (in his first and *only* appearance) bowled unchanged throughout both innings, a feat only accomplished for the Gentlemen by two other pairs of bowlers—A. H. Evans and A. G. Steel in 1879 at the Oval, and S. M. J. Woods and F. S. Jackson in 1894 at Lord's.

Pycroft, writing in *Cricketana* in 1863, takes the Gentlemen severely to task in a critical examination of their play. He finds the root of their failure to lie in a false batting method, in a predisposition towards flashy, sensational hits rather than a sound style of defence, and pertinently observes that such batting, however successful on a billiard table like the Oval, was bound to be disastrous

at Lord's, when only the most watchful defence and rigorous self-restraint could triumph over the "shooters and bumpers" which were a commonplace of play. Now Pycroft, though never ungenerous, was certainly an austere judge, but the fact remains that in the twenty years or so prior to 1865 (W. G.'s first appearance in the match) the ranks of the Gentlemen contain the names of really very few great batsmen.

The greatest individual batting performance in the period was undoubtedly Reginald Hankey's score of 70 in the 1857 match, an innings which was immediately recognized as a masterpiece. The wicket was no better than was usual at Lord's, the bowling on such a ground most formidable—Wisden, Willsher, Caffyn, Jackson, and Stephenson. Hankey was far from well when he went in to bat, and remarked that "he did not feel like troubling them long," but in 105 minutes he had scored 70 runs, and hit the best bowling in England all over the ground. His batting astounded the players, and Jemmy Grundy declared that in all his experience this was positively the finest hitting he had ever seen. Of other batsmen of the period, mention must be made of Arthur Haygarth, compiler of *Scores and Biographies*, and in his time a most stubborn, defensive player, who appeared in the match between '46-'59, and must have been at the wicket for as long a time as any of his contemporaries, though with, numerically, a very modest result. Then there were the three Surrey amateurs—Lane, Miller, and Burbidge—but they found Lord's very different from the Oval for run-getting. In 1852 comes John Walker, of the famous brotherhood who were to do so much for the next generation of amateur cricket. True to the family tradition, he was out for 0 in his first effort, but in the second innings played splendidly for 58, and his average of 20 for eighteen innings between '52 and '63 represents fine batting. The year 1856 saw the first appearance at Lord's of the greatest of that gifted family, V. E. Both as batsman and bowler he was for seventeen years a pillar of strength to the Gentlemen.

Though consistently and badly outclassed in batting, the Gentlemen could claim several bowlers who, if inferior in consistency, were at least on occasion as formidable as the leading professionals. With two exceptions—V. E. Walker and C. D. Marsham—the leading amateur bowlers were all fast. In the forties and fifties there was a regular "cult" for tear-away bowling, and there is no doubt that many of Mynn's imitators resembled him in nothing but pace, and cost their sides more runs in wides and byes than they could ever hope to balance by such captures as they effected. But in Sir Frederick Bathurst, Harvey Fellows, and G. Yonge the Gentlemen could point to three fine bowlers who, but for the weakness in amateur batting, might have gone far to make a good match of it with the Players.

The first-mentioned was a Wykehamist, but left young to enter the Guards, so that he was never in the School Eleven; between '31 and '54 he captured 73 wickets for the Gentlemen at Lord's, and was recognized as one of the greatest fast bowlers of his day. His performance with Mathew Kempson in 1853 has already been mentioned. In 1857 he was President of the M.C.C., an honour not subsequently accorded to a Wykehamist until 1922, when Lord Chelmsford was elected. Harvey Fellows was an Etonian, but did not go to the 'Varsity, and only played for the Gentlemen six times from 1847 to 1851, but for a short time he was a positive terror to all who opposed him. His action was low but swinging, and his speed was reported decidedly faster than Jackson's. His greatest performance was his taking of 10 wickets in the 1849 match, when he bowled so fast that Pilch turned his head away to play him, and old William Lillywhite, now aged fifty-seven, frankly refused to go in! By general agreement he made the ball, on delivery, "hum like a top." The last of the trio is G. Yonge, whose career in big cricket, though short, was altogether remarkable. He was three years in the Eton Eleven (1841-1843), during which he took 37 wickets against Winchester and Harrow in the annual week at Lord's. He was then five years in the Oxford team, capturing 43 Cambridge wickets, of which 30 were clean-bowled, a record which is equalled by none and approached by very few in the whole annals of the match. He played five years for the Gentlemen, and though his success was humble compared with his previous figures at Lord's, his great pace and accuracy were remarkable even in that era of great fast bowlers.

C. D. Marsham, like G. E. Yonge, played five times for Oxford, and with his medium-paced bowling took 40 wickets in the University match for 9 apiece. As a Freshman of nineteen he played for the Gentlemen in 1854, and continued to do so till 1862. In these matches he took 48 wickets, winding up with a record of 11 wickets for 97 on his last appearance, but not once was he on the winning side. In 1858 Lillywhite referred to him as "*the* most difficult bowler of the year," and in 1860 he was elected captain of the first Eleven of England against the next Fourteen; but in 1862 he took Holy Orders and retired from the game. He was the father of Cloudesley Marsham, who captained Kent in 1906, when that county won the Championship, and he was brother to "Uncle Charles" Marsham, the author of that immortal description of the game, "She's struck, and they have to step and fetch her."

## CHAPTER XII

### THE COMING OF W. G.

I NOW propose to attempt, as briefly as I can, a general survey of the conditions under which first-class cricket was played in the years immediately preceding the next great milestone on our route—the arrival on the field of the Grace family in 1862. For this I shall be primarily indebted to that very interesting *Little Book* of W. G.'s, to the two chapters on "Lord's" and "Evolutions" in Lord Harris's *A Few Short Runs*, and to a chapter in Richard Daft's *Kings of Cricket*.

First, then, as to dress: the tall hat, whether of black or white beaver, almost universal in the thirties and forties, had by the sixties given place to the billycock and, in the case of a few free-lances such as Felix and Jemmy Grundy, to caps of a dashing type. Hardly anyone played bare-headed. Uniform shirts of black, blue, or red and white in a pattern of lines, spots or check, were very common; trousers were almost universally white, but belts with a clasp were far more common than sashes. The shoes of the beginning of the century had been replaced by boots, at first of black, later of brown, and so, through a compromise of brown and white, to the present universal buckskin.

Next as to the implements of the game: the bats were, of course, cut on a very different pattern from that with which we are now familiar; the blade varied very little in thickness throughout its length, and many of them, even as late as the fifties, were all of one piece with the handle, though ash handles were coming into vogue, and in 1853 Nixon introduced the very important innovation of cane handles. Rubber coverings for bat handles were, of course, unknown, and are a comparatively very recent invention. Balls were very much as they are to-day, and then as now the majority were manufactured within the confines of Kent. Pads, says Pycroft, were invented by one H. Daubeney in 1836; *Scores and Biographies* says that Nixon was the inventor and that he also devised the skeleton guard, but it seems questionable whether they can really be attributed to any one individual; their use was far from universal even in the sixties, though a sort of shin pad worn underneath the trousers was fairly common. Gloves came in somewhere about

the same time, both, no doubt, in reaction against the Alfred Mynn school of bowling. Pycroft himself invented a sort of finger-stall arrangement which he wore when at Oxford, and Felix originated the regular tubular glove. Wicket-keeping gloves were very primitive and unsubstantial; there was no attempt to reinforce the fingers; but it is to be remembered that the majority of wicket-keepers did not regard it as their business to stand up to bowling of real pace, and were universally supported by a long-stop (Marcon needed three!), then one of the most important positions in the field.

Perhaps the greatest of all the changes within the last sixty years is in the condition of the grounds. Many of the A.E.E. matches were played on grounds that no village team of to-day would pass. Is it not recorded that at Glasgow Fuller Pilch had on arrival to borrow a scythe and mow the wicket, whilst at Truro one of the fielders put up a brace of partridges in the long field? But even the classic grounds were, on our modern standard, very primitive. The Oval, Canterbury, Brighton, and Fenner's always produced good wickets; but Lord's was terribly bad, and it was said that the only respect in which its pitch resembled a billiard table was the pockets! Imagine then what it must have been like to face such men as Jackson and Tarrant, Harvey Fellows, Marcon, and Kirwan! Boundaries were, as a rule, unknown; their gradual introduction, dating from the sixties, had an adverse effect on deep fielding, and especially on throwing, to which the simultaneous urbanization of the country also contributed. Nets were unknown for practice at Lord's until 1866, and for considerably longer in the North. W. G. tells a story how he was once practising at Bramall Lane and being bowled at by any spectator who happened to possess a ball. He had played one ball towards mid-on, but the next bowler was at him so quick that he let fly before he had time to think where his last shot had gone. The result, a hard drive, hit the first bowler full in the mouth, knocking out two teeth, whereupon the latter enthusiast merely remarked, "I don't mind; the big 'un did it!"

The hours of play—at Lord's for example—were, noon to 7 p.m. on the first day, 11 a.m. to 7.30 p.m. on the other two. Lunch was at 3 p.m., and lasted only thirty-five minutes; there was no interval. On the great majority of grounds there were no facilities at all for the players at lunch-time; they had to struggle with the spectators to obtain their sandwiches and beer out of the general refreshment tent! The "telegraph" was first instituted at Lord's in 1846, at the Oval two years later. In 1848 also Fred Lillywhite introduced his portable printing press for the production of score-cards wherever he went, though the cards themselves were in use on various grounds a good many years

earlier. The Press were not catered for at all until 1867, and consequently the accounts of the big matches were extremely meagre.

There was no recognized body of first-class umpires; each county brought its own to the match, and W. G. remarks that in his young days those from Lancashire and Notts generally knew which side was batting! The majority of them wore tall hats (later, "bowlers") and swallow-tailed coats; white tunics were then unknown. The system of scoring had now reached a more or less final form: wides and no-balls were first scored as such in 1830, and leg-byes in 1850. A development of considerable importance was that introduced in the M.C.C. score-books of 1836, by which the bowler was given credit for the wickets caught or stumped off him; until that date his name was not recorded, only the catcher's or stumper's, and this, of course, was a particular injustice to the slow bowler. In 1835 a law was passed that any side 100 runs in arrears at the end of the first innings should follow-on; in 1854 the margin was reduced to 80, and until very recently this follow-on was, of course, compulsory and not left to the discretion of the leading side. In 1849 permission was given for the ground—i.e. the pitch—to be swept and rolled at the beginning of each innings; hitherto it had never been touched from the first ball of the match to the last.

But by far the most important change was, of course, that which related to the bowler's action. Edgar Willsher did not quite overlap with the great Kent Eleven of the forties, but from 1850 he was a regular member of the county side for twenty-five years, and of the Players' Eleven for seventeen. He never had quite the pace of Jackson or Tarrant, but he was at least as accurate as the former, and far more so than the Cambridge bowler; while the fact that he was left-handed, and with a strong action break from leg, made him, to use the words of *Scores and Biographies*, "perhaps the most difficult of all," and for some years he would probably have been the absolute first choice as a bowler for a representative eleven. And yet it is likely enough that his name, like so many others, would have sunk into the mists of forgotten history were it not for the one, most famous, incident with which it is associated.

It was a lovely evening in late August 1862—the 27th of the month, to be precise—and the Oval was crowded, when, in response to a gigantic total of 503 by England, the opening Surrey pair, Mortlock and Humphrey, came out to bat. V. E. Walker, who had made history with a vengeance in the same match three years before, and was captaining the England team, opened the bowling with Willsher. Almost at once a magnificent catch by Jemmy Grundy off one of Walker's lobs sent back Humphrey, and Burbidge took his place. Willsher began his third over, bowling just in his usual way, but was at once no-balled by John Lillywhite,



who was umpiring his end. Five times had this been repeated, when the bowler flung down the ball, and the whole England Eleven, except the two amateurs, Messrs. Walker and C. G. Lyttelton, left the field amid a scene of the most intense excitement. Play was not resumed that night, and anxious indeed must have been the colloquies as to what should be done on the morrow. Eventually it was decided to substitute Street for Lillywhite next day, and the game was continued without incident.

Now there is no doubt that Willsher's normal delivery did transgress the existing law of the hand being below the shoulder, but the same was true of many others, and there seems to have been a tacit agreement among umpires to turn the blind eye to the letter of the law. Not so with John Lillywhite, who conceived it to be his duty to force an issue on the question, and saw no better means than to no-ball the first bowler in England in almost the greatest match of the year. There was no question of personal antagonism, for umpire and bowler were close friends, and though temporarily estranged by the contretemps, were happily reconciled again. Lillywhite acted out of loyalty to the game, and forced the M.C.C. to take action that was already long overdue. Two years later Law X was finally revised, and the long battle of the bowler for liberty was won.

#### W. G.

When that most brilliant of all Australian batsmen—Victor Trumper—passed away at the end of June 1915, the London evening papers interrupted for once the inevitable sequence of war sensations on their news-bills and paid their tribute to his genius in the simple headline, "Death of a Great Cricketer." Four months later the greatest of all cricketers was laid to rest, and England stopped for a moment in its breathless business of war to realize that the most wonderful chapter in the whole history of sport was at long last closed. That chapter has, of course, been explored and annotated by a host of authorities, and it would be idle in so slender an outline of history as this to attempt even the barest summary of its marvellous record. Nevertheless it may be not unreasonable, for the benefit of a generation who never saw the Champion in the flesh, to venture some estimate of his supremacy.

In mere weight of statistical achievement he stands, of course, alone, and to those who would delve into his truly staggering figures I would recommend Mr. Ashley-Cooper's "Record of his Performances in First-Class Cricket," contributed to the 1916 *Wisden*, or the same authority's appendix to the *Memorial Biography*. Summary in a short space is impossible, selection invidious, but argument may at least be shortly silenced by his

aggregate of 54,896 runs and 2,864 wickets, his 126 centuries, his marvellous figures of 6,000 runs and 270 wickets for the Gentlemen v. the Players, and, most wonderful of all, his 1,000 runs in May 1895, thirty years after his first appearance in first-class cricket.

Almost as truly as it was said of Napoleon, has W. G. "cast a doubt upon all past glory, and rendered all future renown impossible." He contracted fifty years of cricket history into a single span which he bestrode like a Colossus, and he defied all possible rivalry in the future by virtue of the conditions under which he won and consolidated his supremacy. There can never be another W. G., for never again can a batsman arise who will make century after century against a great generation of fast bowlers on wickets many of which the modern schoolboy would consider unfit for a house-match, and on grounds where, as often as not, every hit had to be run out. Moreover, it is barely conceivable that any cricketer in the years to come will so revolutionize the accepted values of the game as did the Champion in the first ten or fifteen years of his career. In the first place he altered the whole conception of batting: until his time a man was either a back player like Carpenter or a forward player like Hayward, a hitter like George Griffith or a sticker like Arthur Haygarth or Harry Jupp. But W. G. was each and all at once, and here I cannot do better than quote the masterly verdict of the *Jubilee Book of Cricket*: "He revolutionized cricket. He turned it from an accomplishment into a science; he united in his mighty self all the good points of all the good players and made utility the criterion of style . . .; he turned the old one-stringed instrument into a many chorded lyre. But in addition he made his execution equal his invention."

Then again, for the first time in cricket history, he asserted the supremacy of the batsman over the fast bowler who, since the days of Alfred Mynn, had ruled the roost, and in the persons of the great professional bowlers of the fifties and sixties had dominated the game. In his jubilee year the Champion scored 126 out of 203 against Kortright, when that bowler was probably as fast as anyone who has ever lived; thirty-five years earlier, when only just fifteen years old, he had scored 32 against Jackson and Tarrant. All his life he revelled in fast bowling, and it was this more than anything else that so sensationally turned the tide in favour of the Gentlemen in their matches against the Players. Upon that series no cricketer has had an influence even comparable with W. G.'s; when he first played for them, at Lord's in '65, when not yet seventeen years old, the Gentlemen had lost nineteen consecutive games; of the next 39 games they won 27 and only lost 4. There were, of course, many fine amateurs who contributed to this result, but one line of figures will suffice to show how predominant was the Champion's part: in consecutive innings against the Players in 1871-1872-1873,

he scored 217, 77 and 112, 117, 163, 158, and 70. An old cricketer with whom I was talking recently was in fact not far short of the mark when he said: "He killed professional fast bowling; for years they were almost afraid to bowl within his reach!"

Finally it may be said of W. G. that he did more to popularize cricket than any man who ever lived: his genial personality, his Jovian form, his inexhaustible vitality and stamina and enthusiasm, all combined with his prodigious prowess to make him the focus for an empire's devotion to the game. He was incomparably the greatest "draw" of all the sportsmen of history; he was the nearest approach to a living embodiment of John Bull that England has seen, and however much Mr. H. G. Wells may sneer at "the tribal gods for whom peoples would die," I can believe that the Bishop of Hereford read deeper into the heart of man when he spoke of W. G. the words with which his memorial biography so fitly closes: "Had Grace been born in ancient Greece, the *Iliad* would have been a different book. Had he lived in the Middle Ages, he would have been a crusader and would now have been lying with his legs crossed in some ancient abbey, having founded a great family. As he was born when the world was older, he was the best known of all Englishmen and the king of that English game least spoilt by any form of vice."

In any history of cricket for the last forty years of the nineteenth century W. G.'s performances with bat and ball must necessarily run like some inevitable fugue, but perhaps I cannot do better at this stage than sketch his earliest training and successes in the game, culminating in his triumphant appearance in representative cricket at an age at which most boys are struggling for their places in their house or school elevens. The home of the Graces was at Downend, a village some four miles out of Bristol. Their father was a country doctor always devoted to the game and keen enough as a young man when leisure was scanty to rise at 5 a.m. on a summer's morning to practise on Durdham Downs. Their mother was a strikingly handsome and masterful lady of the Spartan type, who thoroughly understood cricket, and from whose highly intelligent criticism none of her sons escaped. In his enthusiasm for the game Mr. Grace senior found a ready ally in his brother-in-law, Alfred Pocock, to whom the boys owed much in their early training. A year before W. G. was born the local club which his father had started amalgamated with the West Gloucestershire Club, and under that name continued for the next twenty years as the medium which introduced the boys to match play. But first they had to be grounded in the rudiments of the game, and to that end a pitch was carefully prepared, at the sacrifice of some fruit-trees, in the orchard adjoining their home, "The Chestnuts." It was here that, under their uncle's vigilant eye and with the assistance of

three admirable canine fielders, the brothers practised day in day out from March to October.

W. G. was fourth of the brotherhood, only Fred being his junior, and, as has almost invariably been the case, the younger profited alike by the errors and successes of his seniors. E. M., his elder by seven years, developed almost at once that propensity for cross-hitting which, thanks to his amazing eye, made him for years the terror of every length-bowler in England. This W. G. attributes to his having used a full-sized bat at too early an age; he himself used a small bat, and was told to confine himself to learning defence with the left shoulder well forward before he thought of hitting. At the same time he was not allowed to bowl more than 18 yards, and on the importance of this he lays considerable emphasis. It may well encourage many an aspiring young cricketer to read the Champion's confession that, so far from the game coming readily to him, he had to work very hard at it, and only his perseverance saved him from giving in under the many disappointments that inevitably came his way. But persevere he did, and gradually his reward came. In 1862 his father had founded what was really the original Gloucestershire County Club, though then of purely amateur status, and towards the end of August W. G., when just over fourteen, played his first county match—against Devonshire—and scored 18 out of 92. But it was his third appearance for the county—against Somerset a year later—that really gave earnest of coming glory: in that game, when he would, for example, still have been eligible for a junior house eleven at school, he scored 52 not out and took 6 wickets for 43.

It was in 1864 that he first left the West to take part in an important match. His elder brother, E. M., who will claim our attention shortly, was not yet returned from Australia, whither he had gone with George Parr's team, when the South Wales Club set out to play against the Surrey Club at the Oval, and the Gentlemen of Sussex on the "Old Ground" at Hove; W. G. was chosen to take his place. On arrival in London the captain of the club suggested to Henry, the eldest of the Graces, that, as he had the chance of obtaining the services of a fine player for the latter match, the young cricketer should stand down. Henry strongly demurred, and as W. G. scored 5 and 38 at the Oval, the suggestion was dropped. The Sussex match was played on July 14th, 15th, 16th, the latter date being two days before W. G.'s sixteenth birthday. He went in first wicket down, and scored 170 runs, following this up with 56 not out in the second innings! Before July was over he played twice at Lord's, against the M.C.C. and IZ., had scored 50, 34, and 47, and earned a flattering notice in the authoritative pages of Lillywhite's *Companion*.

The year 1865 saw him firmly established as one of the leading

cricketers of the day. He assisted the Gentlemen both at Lord's and the Oval, the former, as we have seen, being the first match they had won for nineteen years ; he played for All England against Surrey, and for the Gentlemen of the South against the Players of the South he came out to some conviction as a bowler, taking 13 wickets in the match for 84 runs ! At this time he bowled a genuine round-arm—the alteration in the law had only just come into force—and it was not for some few years that he developed that “ high, home, and easy ” style that was to win him more than 2,000 victims, and to become as familiar to cricket crowds as his beard and his M.C.C. cap.

Just after his eighteenth birthday, in 1866, he startled a world that was already beginning to look for sensation from him by scoring 224 not out for England against Surrey at the Oval. On the second day of the match V. E. Walker, the England captain, allowed him to leave the field in order to compete in the quarter-mile hurdle race at the National Olympian Association Meeting at the Crystal Palace, which he successfully won in fast time. From then onwards successes came so thick and fast that we can do no more than notice his 8 wickets for 25 against the Players at Lord's in '67 ; his 134 in the same match next year on a wicket which was bad even for Lord's, and in which there was only one other double-figure in the innings ; his 215, again against the Players, but this time at the Oval, three days before his twenty-second birthday ; until we come to 1871, which, but for the astonishing revival in 1895, would assuredly be the *annus mirabilis* of all his miraculous career.

In that season he actually scored in first-class matches 2,739 runs, with an average of 78. Not only was the aggregate altogether unparalleled—and it was not exceeded for a quarter of a century to come—but his average was more than double that of his nearest competitor, Richard Daft. Ten times he exceeded the hundred, scores ranging from 116 against Notts, the first century ever scored at Trent Bridge, and an innings that occasioned a “ general strike ” among the factory hands who flocked in thousands to the ground, to 278 for the South against the North. The last effort, together with his 217 for the Gentlemen *v.* the Players at Hove, were both made under peculiar circumstances. The first match was played for the benefit of the great Surrey cricketer and coach, H. H. Stephenson, and from the very first ball W. G. was given out l.b.w. to J. C. Shaw. H. H. was desperately disappointed, but W. G. bade him cheer up, “ for it would not happen again.” Nor did it, for W. G. batted from 4 p.m. on the second day to the same hour on the third, and the Oval was packed to see him do it. The second game was for the benefit of John Lillywhite, and with the third ball J. C. Shaw broke Grace's wicket. This time it was the *bénéficiaire* who refused to be daunted, and taking two sovereigns from

his pocket, asked the batsman to give him back sixpence for every run he made in the second innings, and, when the 80 were exhausted, to stand the racket himself. W. G. went in a second time at 3 p.m. on the second day, and when stumps were drawn, Lillywhite met him with the beaming request for "five pounds on account" !

It was no wonder that after such a season *The Companion* should hail him with that title of which time can never rob him, and which has been accorded to but one other man, Alfred Mynn, in all the long history of the game—"the Champion Cricketer"—and of this I know no more striking testimony than that recorded by Mr. Ashley-Cooper in the *Memorial Biography* when he tells how, when W. G. burst upon the world of cricket, an enthusiast brought Mynn's pads to him, declaring that only he was worthy to wear them !

In company with all other cricketers, his elder brother, E. M.—or "The Coroner"—was to a great extent overshadowed by W. G., but before the latter had begun to make history E. M. had already established himself as one of the most brilliant, audacious, and determined cricketers in England. From an early age he had shown himself impatient of the canons of orthodoxy in batting, and at the beginning of his career the critics were scandalized at his cross-hitting ; but a very few seasons were enough to make them reconsider their early verdict, and it is amusing to read how Pycroft in reviewing the season of 1863 devotes some pages to a discussion of "Mr. Grace's play," in which he partly deprecates his scandalous method, partly tries to maintain that it is not so heterodox as most people believe, and ends by putting the pertinent question whether, in view of his exceptional average of 40 runs an innings, it was not justifiable for him to say : "It is high time to adjust your standard to fit the fact of my play. If my style is not counted good play, it is high time it were !"

W. G. has an interesting critique of his elder brother in which he pays a great tribute to his nerve and audacity when things were going wrong. With the conventional treatment of the good length ball then universal, and the consequent stereotyped placing of the field, E. M. was a terror to bowlers. The length ball on or just outside the off stump was his speciality. He would hit it cross-batted on the rise with a fast and low trajectory to long-on or wider. The door on the on-side would then be shut, and E. M. would turn his attention to the covers ; what is more, he would start doing this from the moment he reached the crease. In addition to his batting he was a cunning and successful bowler, eventually of lobs ; but at the start of his career, of a mixture of round-arm and underhand, which, it must be admitted, he would often vary

without any warning of his intentions to the batsman ! His success with the ball, even towards the end of his life, was extraordinary. In his sixty-fourth and sixty-fifth years for the Thornbury Club he took 655 wickets, and in his last season (1909) 119. Even if this was in local cricket, when the Doctor was something of an autocrat, and kept, it is said, one or two of his deep-fields secreted in an adjacent garden, these figures are almost incredible.

E. M.'s first great performance was at Canterbury in 1862, when, playing as an emergency man for the M.C.C. against the Gentlemen of Kent, he made 192 not out and took 10 wickets in his opponents' second innings. On two other occasions in the preceding year had he performed the extraordinary feat of scoring 100 and taking all 10 wickets in an innings in the same match. This all-round play, together with the fact that as a point he has never been excelled—probably never equalled—soon won for him a leading place among the players of his day. In 1863 his average of 35 in first-class matches exceeded that of all the cracks, and it was no surprise that room was found for him in the team that visited Australia that winter under the captaincy of George Parr. E. M.'s record in the Gentlemen *v.* Players matches is not outstanding, but for years he did splendidly for Gloucestershire, and alike in aggregate of achievement, in enterprise and personality, he will always remain one of the great and most picturesque characters of the game.

The youngest of the family, Fred, was also an exceptionally fine player, whose brilliant career was only too short-lived. He first appeared in first-class cricket in 1866, when fifteen years old. His record both with the bat and ball for the Gentlemen *v.* Players between 1870 and 1878 is quite outstanding, and he was one of the very greatest out-fielders there has ever been. It was he who caught out Bonnor off what is said to have been the highest hit ever seen at the Oval.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE BEGINNINGS OF INTERNATIONAL CRICKET

#### THE VISIT TO THE STATES, 1859.

**I**N the year 1859 cricket entered upon its last, or oceanic, stage, for at the end of the English season twelve professional cricketers crossed the Atlantic to play a short series of matches in Canada and the United States. This tour was afterwards described in detail by Fred Lillywhite, who took part in it as official scorer and Press agent, and those who are interested in conditions of travel and hotel life in North America half a century ago will find much to interest and amuse them in his little book, in addition to a full description of the cricket.

A much shorter and most readable account is to be found in a chapter of that capital book *71 Not Out* by William Caffyn, who was himself a member of the team.

This considerable venture was due to the enterprise of, on the one hand, the old Eton and Cambridge cricketer, W. P. Pickering, and the Montreal Cricket Club, the leading cricket body in America, and, on the other, Mr. Edmund Wilder, President of the Cricketers' Fund (which subsequently developed into the Cricketers' Fund Friendly Society), Fred Lillywhite, and, among the actual players, George Parr and John Wisden. Negotiations between the parties concerned had been opened three years before, and eventually during the Canterbury Week the final arrangements were concluded. On the guarantee of the Montreal Club, each of the twelve players was to receive £50, in addition to the whole of their expenses. They were to play five matches, at Montreal, New York, Philadelphia, Rochester, and Hamilton, the two middle games being against Twenty-two of the U.S.A., the first and the last against Twenty-two of Lower and Upper Canada respectively, whilst the Rochester game was against a Combined Twenty-two.

The team, if not absolutely representative, was nevertheless very strong: it consisted of wellnigh the pick of the All England and United Elevens, six from each, and its territorial composition is not a bad index of the relative county strengths of that period. From Notts came Parr, Grundy, and Jackson; from Sussex, Wisden and John Lillywhite; from Cambridge, their two famous "cracks,"



Hayward and Carpenter, with Ducky Diver; while Surrey contributed no less than four—Stephenson, Julius Cæsar, Lockyer, and Caffyn.

The twelve set sail from Liverpool on September 7th, and after a baddish passage of fifteen days, cast anchor in the St. Lawrence beneath the Heights of Abraham, which Wolfe had won for the Empire a hundred years, almost to the day, before them. The opening match at Montreal was well patronized, especially by the fair sex. The Canadians were very keen, but found the England bowling too much for them, especially George Parr's lobs, which obtained 16 wickets: they were beaten by 8 wickets. A complimentary dinner at the St. Lawrence Hotel, then the best and biggest in Canada, wound up a successful first chapter, and the tourists set out on their journey to New York. Fred Lillywhite is not a little querulous over this stage in their travels, and especially over the treatment meted out to his precious scoring-booth on wheels; but we rather gather from Caffyn's account that he was a bit of a grouser, and finally called down on his head the wrath of old George Parr, who consigned him and booth alike to a considerably warmer climate. At Hoboken, New York, the interest evinced in the English team was at least as great as it had been in Canada. Over 2,000 people visited the ground on the Sunday before the game started, and more than 25,000 are said to have watched the game. The ground was bad, and the play of the U.S. Twenty-two very inferior, England winning by an innings and 64 runs. Caffyn, in the second innings, took 16 wickets for 25 runs!

The next stage was to Philadelphia, a city which, though Quaker in origin, was nevertheless the centre of all athletic enthusiasm in the Continent, and at least a thousand ladies graced the ladies' stand. Unfortunately the weather was by this time (October 10th) beginning to break up, and only a couple of wagon-loads of sawdust contrived to make play possible at all on the sodden ground! The tourists won by 7 wickets, but were able to be very complimentary to the Twenty-two on the standard of their play and to Hammond, an old Kent cricketer, who was their professional, on the results of his teaching. A week later the last of the officially arranged matches was begun at Hamilton. In spite of the rain and the growing cold, there was no lack of attendance and enthusiasm, especially for Tom Lockyer's wicket-keeping. The Surrey man played up to his audience, returning John Jackson's balls so quickly to the bowler that some of the less experienced of the spectators could not be convinced that the ball had ever been delivered at all! Once more England triumphed—this time by 10 wickets. A final match, extra to the original programme, was played at Rochester against a Combined Twenty-two. This was interrupted on the second day by a heavy fall of snow, and only finished under conditions

which made the tourists field in great-coats, mufflers, and gloves ! The chronicler feelingly observes that " the most agreeable innings on such a day could only be obtained indoors with a hot dinner before you and a bottle of old port to follow." This match, too, the tourists won by an innings, so that when on their return passage down the St. Lawrence they passed the good ship *Nova Scotia* in which they had voyaged from England, they could proudly display for its information a large board with the chalked-up legend, " Won All Matches." After experiencing even rougher weather than on their way out, the Twelve reached Liverpool on November 11th. On page 140 of Caffyn's *71 Not Out* there is an excellent photograph of the team taken on board the *Nova Scotia* immediately before they sailed. The same authority records that they made something like £90 a head out of their two months' trip.

#### FIRST TOURS IN AUSTRALIA.

Two years later, in 1861, another team left England, this time for Australia. The promoters of this tour were Messrs. Spiers and Pond, who in the summer of that year sent over a certain Mr. Mallam to make the arrangements. It was at a dinner in Birmingham, after the North and South match, that the leading professionals were first definitely approached. The terms, £150 a head, with all expenses, did not commend themselves to George Parr and the northern players, and for the moment it looked as if the scheme would fall through. Mr. Mallam then approached Mr. Burrup, the enthusiastic secretary of the Surrey C.C.C., and through his good offices succeeded in persuading H. H. Stephenson and six other members of that famous side to form the nucleus of a team. To these were added five others, including Tom Hearne and the two Yorkshiremen, Iddison and E. Stephenson. H. Stephenson's selection to captain the side caused a good deal of ill-feeling among the northerners; why it is not easy to understand, considering that they had refused to undertake the trip themselves.

The team left Liverpool on October 18th and landed at Melbourne on Christmas Eve, when they were met by over 10,000 people and driven in a coach-and-four to an official reception. So great was the popular enthusiasm over the visit that for their first day's practice they were driven off some miles to a secret destination in the bush, in order that they might have some peace from the attentions of their admirers.

The opening match at Melbourne against Eighteen of Victoria saw a crowd of over 15,000 on the ground when, to the strains of the National Anthem, the Englishmen took the field. Each wore a very light helmet-shaped hat, and a sash and hat ribbon of a distinctive hue corresponding to a colour set down on the score-card

against each man's name. The heat was terrific, but thanks to the batting of Caffyn and Griffith, England made 305, and ran out winners by an innings and 96 runs. In all twelve matches were played, including one at Hobart against Twenty-two of Tasmania. Six were won, four drawn, and two were lost. Of these latter, one was against Twenty-two of Castlemaine, the other, at Sydney, against a combined Twenty-two of N.S.W. and Victoria.

The tour, all told, was a great success. Caffyn and Griffith had splendid records with both bat and ball, and Stephenson scored great success as an orator. The Englishmen were immensely impressed with the Melbourne ground, which in its water supply, pavilion, grand-stand capable of holding 6,000 people, and banked seats for the general public, represented, even at this early date, a standard unapproached by anything we could show at home.

Messrs. Spiers and Pond are said to have cleared £11,000 over their enterprise.

At the end of the tour one of the English team remained behind, having accepted a permanent post as cricket coach to the leading club in Sydney. This was Charles Lawrence, the Surrey player, a good all-round cricketer and renowned among his contemporaries as a judge of the game.

In the winter of 1863-1864 a second team, this time under Parr's captaincy, visited the country and, like its predecessor, enjoyed a great success. The side was, with the exception of E. M. Grace, exclusively professional. All the matches played were against odds, but just before the finish the Twenty-two of N.S.W. came very near to spoiling the Englishmen's unbeaten record by running them to a margin of 1 wicket, amid a scene of intense excitement. At the end of the tour William Caffyn was engaged as coach by the Melbourne Club, and thus entered upon that period of seven years' devoted work in that town and at Sydney to which the Australians in this early period of their cricket education owed so much. In his *71 Not Out* Caffyn writes most interestingly about his experiences as a coach, and pays the warmest tribute to the energy and enthusiasm with which the southern cricketers worked at the game, noticing especially their ceaseless attention to and pride in fielding.

Nine years passed before, in the winter of 1873, W. G. took out the third English team on what was for him virtually his honeymoon tour. The side included four other amateurs, of whom the captain's younger brother, Fred, was one. Once more all the matches were against odds, and only three matches out of the fifteen played were lost; but there seems unfortunately to have been a good deal of friction on more than one occasion. Nevertheless it was a further stimulus to the Colonial interest in the game, and the appearance of the Champion created immeasurable excitement. A foolish story had got about that W. G. had backed himself in £500 to £50 that

he would never be bowled in Australia, so that when H. F. Boyle hit his leg-stump in the opening match against Victoria the enthusiasm and the "Cooee's" beggared description. Though in the last and most important match of the tour his eleven defeated a combined Fifteen of N.S.W. and Victoria, W. G.'s parting words to Boyle at the farewell dinner were indeed prophetic: "If you ever come to England, and your bowlers are as good there as they are here, you will make a name for yourselves." Four more years were to pass and the name would be made, indeed!

Of the 1876-1877 tour we have a most interesting and entertaining account in Alfred Shaw's *Cricket Reminiscences*. Of their many adventures on sea and land and flood we can make no mention here, but none of the party were likely to forget the night in New Zealand when their coach got stuck in inky darkness and a rising torrent in the Otira Gorge, or the opening of their match at Christchurch, where they arrived just in time to take the field after an eighty hours' journey by road. The conditions on many of the Australian grounds were very primitive, for Jesse Hide, the old Sussex player, had not yet initiated our kinsmen into the art of wicket preparation in which they are now such past-masters. For instance, at Adelaide the authorities were afraid to use the roller for fear lest it should bruise and kill the grass; at Ararat the only available roller was of wood, and some 10 inches in diameter; while at Goulburn the out-fielders were supplemented by a couple of active young kangaroos! But there was no lack of enthusiasm among Australian cricketers. Sometimes it was hardly tempered with discretion, as when at Sydney the tourists were condemned to bat on a very rough wicket, for which another pitch, heavily watered and rolled, was substituted for the home side's innings on the second day! Betting on the matches was almost universal.

The great event of the tour was the game played at Melbourne on March 15th, 16th, and 17th, against a Combined Australian Eleven, the first time in which our great opponents had ever met us on level terms. It is true that the tourists had only just returned from their devastating experiences in New Zealand, that one of the bowlers, Armitage of Yorkshire, was so done up that he could scarcely bowl within the batsman's reach, and that Bannerman, whose innings settled the match, was missed by the same unfortunate fellow from the easiest of catches before he had made 10. But all this has passed into the limbo of forgotten things, while history still traces clearly the writing on the wall, how that Australia beat England level-handed by 45 runs, and Charles Bannerman played an innings of 165 when none of his colleagues exceeded 20 at either attempt. A fortnight later, England, thanks to Ulyett's batting, reversed the verdict, but nothing could then quench the flame of Australian enthusiasm, and

from this first victory it was but a short step to the greatest move of all, the despatch of the first team to England in 1878.

#### THE AUSTRALIANS IN ENGLAND, 1878.

The sponsors of the first Australian tour in England were James Lillywhite, who acted as their match-making agent, and, on the part of the tourists, J. Conway, of Melbourne, who officiated as manager throughout the tour. The captain of the team was David Gregory, one of the remarkable family of seven brothers, five of whom played for N.S.W., and uncle of both Sydney Gregory, who has played more innings in Test Matches than any other cricketer, and of J. M., the great all-rounder of the 1921 team.

The programme arranged for them was a long one, thirty-seven matches in all, of which twenty were against odds, and it says much for the health and stamina of the tourists that, with only twelve regular players at their disposal, they were hardly ever obliged to call upon outside or occasional assistance. At this time South Australia was still in its cricket infancy, so that of the twelve, six hailed from N.S.W., five, including Midwinter, who joined the side in England, from Victoria, while one man, G. H. Bailey, came from Tasmania. After a preliminary tour in New Zealand, the Australians reached Liverpool on May 14th. They suffered a rude shock in the specimen of an English summer that awaited them, and must have felt that sweaters were more desirable than the silk shirts with which their bags were stored. The opening match at Nottingham found their batsmen helpless under the novel conditions against Shaw and Morley, and they had to admit defeat by over an innings.

It was on May 27th that English cricket suffered the shock of its life. When, on a showery morning after a heavy night's rain, and with "casual water" standing in puddles on the ground, the first Australian Eleven drove in their brake on to Lord's ground, they passed practically unrecognized by the 500 or so spectators that had by then mustered; twelve hours later England was ringing with the news that the flower of its cricket had been beaten in a single day, and crowds came flocking to the Tavistock Hotel in Covent Garden to look on the men who had thus flung open a new era in the history of the game. It was just after noon when W. G. and Hornby opened the M.C.C. innings to the bowling of Allan and Boyle. Allan's first ball was hit to the leg boundary by W. G., but the next had him easily caught at square-leg. That fine Cambridge cricketer, C. Booth, was bowled by Boyle in the next over. Hornby and Ridley then added 22 runs, and it was nearly twenty minutes to one when Gregory took off Allan and gave the ball to Spofforth. In ten overs (four balls each) the innings was over, and the greatest bowler of all time had made his

name. His detailed analysis is so remarkable that I reproduce it from *Wisden* :—

. . . 2 . w . . w . . . 1 . . . w w w . . 1 w  
5·3 overs 3 maidens 4 runs 6 wickets

Boyle, at the other end, had bowled 14 overs, 7 maidens, for 14 runs and 3 wickets, and the M.C.C. total was 33.

In rather over half an hour's batting before lunch the Australians lost the wickets of their crack batsmen, Charles Bannerman, Horan and Alec Bannerman, for 17 runs, Alfred Shaw having in that time bowled 13 overs for 1 run! After lunch 5 more wickets fell for an additional 6 runs, but the last 2 wickets added 18, leaving the Australians with a lead of 8. Shaw's complete analysis worked out at 33 overs, 25 maidens, 10 runs, 5 wickets; whilst at the other end his compatriot, Morley, had taken 5 for 31.

The news of the sensational cricket had brought London swarming up to Lord's, and when at 4 p.m. Grace and Hornby opened the Club's second innings to Spofforth and Boyle, more than 5,000 people, in a state of intense expectancy, filled the ring. If there had been sensations enough already, they were nothing to what was to follow. Off Spofforth's first ball W. G. was missed at the wicket, but the second beat and bowled him, while the third did the same for A. J. Webbe. Not to be outdone, Boyle clean bowled Booth and Ridley in his first over, and with Hornby badly hurt by the "Demon" in the next, five of the best batsmen were gone for a single run. Wild and Flowers then manfully added 16 runs; but though Hornby, with W. G. to run for him, reappeared amid a storm of cheers, nothing could stem the tide, and shortly after five o'clock the last wicket fell with the total at 19. This time it is Boyle's figures that deserve a detached record :—

1 . w w . . . . . 1 . 1 1 . . . . . w . . w . . . . w . w  
8·1 overs 6 maidens 3 runs 6 wickets

Spofforth took 4 for 16.

Wanting but 12 runs to win, the Australians lost Bannerman for 1, beaten by a fast break-back from Shaw, but at twenty minutes to six Horan made the winning hit. The scene at the finish beggared description, and the winners could not have been more heartily cheered had Sydney or Melbourne been the scene of their victory.

*Punch*, sensitive as ever to history in the making, greeted it with the following lines :—

The Australians came down like a wolf on the fold,  
The Marylebone cracks for a trifle were bowled;  
Our Grace before dinner was very soon done,  
And Grace after dinner did not get a run.

The defeat of the M.C.C. was a nine-days' wonder, and made the reputation of the Australians at a single stroke, and their subse-

quent record more than justified the prophets who, watching their initial practices at Nottingham, had foretold that they "would beat more than would beat them." In point of fact, they only lost three eleven a-side matches in addition to their first failure against Notts. The slow bowling of W. G. and A. G. Steel won an easy victory for a strong side of the Gentlemen, and Yorkshire avenged by 10 wickets a defeat in their first meeting; but the visitors sustained their heaviest check at the hands of Cambridge, a side which is possibly unrivalled in the whole annals of University cricket.

But to us, who are trying to look at cricket history as a whole, or at least as a process of gradually developing proficiency, the main interest in this first Australian visit lies not so much in the actual record of results, nor even in the shock administered to our insular satisfaction, but in its effect upon the evolution of the game; and in this respect the contemporary accounts of this and the next tours, in 1880 and 1882, make very instructive reading. In the first place we find a decided tribute paid to the resolution, discipline, and training of the eleven; their punctuality and smart appearance, and the automatic way in which they fell into their places, whatever change of bowling was made. So marked seems to have been the impression created that we find a writer in *Lillywhite's Companion* urging the importance of having a representative trial match before we tried conclusions in an "International Match." David Gregory was a successful captain and always had his eleven well in hand, but he had not yet mastered the tactics of field-placing—witness the day when Edward Lyttelton, one of the best cutters of all time, was allowed to make 72 runs with never a third man to stop his fours.

In batting, the Australians could not, on their first visit, pretend to have reached our own best standard. Lawrence and Caffyn had worked wonders for them, but taken as a whole they were still in a rather early stage of development. The majority had a watchful if rugged defence, but when it came to attack they played very much across the line of the ball and did not pay much attention to the position of the left leg and left elbow. Charles Bannerman was a glorious hitter on naturally true lines; a hit of his off Phil Morton, the Cambridge fast bowler, which lifted the ball clean over Lord Londesborough's drag at Lord's, is talked of to this day. Alec Bannerman was already a stubborn defensive player; W. L. Murdoch, though nothing to what he became, was the best stylist in the side; and T. Horan, subsequently the leading critic of the Australian Press, was a fine player to fast bowling; but the remaining seven were, in the perhaps over-severe judgment of a contemporary, "worth about 30 runs against the best professional bowling."

How came it, then, that with such slender resources in batting the Australians more than held their own under the strange conditions of their first tour? To some extent they were aided by the weather, which was uniformly bad all through the season: on the dead and difficult wickets the cross-bat vigorously applied frequently brought in as good a harvest of runs as its more decorous and academic brother. But the root of their success lay, beyond all question, in their bowling, and it is no exaggeration to say that this was a real revelation to English cricketers. In Spofforth, Boyle, Garrett, and Allan they had a quartet superior to any that could be found in England. Allan was never in full health during the tour, and failed to produce the form which had won for him in his own country the title of "the bowler of a century," but he had days when the amount of work he got upon his left-hand slow medium impressed the best English batsmen. What strikes me as most curious is that no contemporary account that I have found says anything about his swerving, yet Spofforth himself says that Allan had the greatest swerve he had ever seen, and secured his swerve by bending his knees and bowling the ball from 23 yards, thus giving it an upward curve and room for the air friction to operate. Garrett was fast medium and of a more or less familiar type, in that he relied on length and, to some extent, on the off-theory; but, when the wicket helped him, he could spin the ball back sharply and had a disconcerting knack of making it get up quick as well. Boyle had length, flight, and leg-spin; his length was immaculate, he was always on the stumps, and his record of 62 wickets for 10 apiece in eleven a-side matches speaks for itself.

And, lastly, there was the "Demon." It was on that fatal day at Lord's that Spofforth was first so dubbed, and when we conjure up a picture of him as he bowled in the first innings, the reason is not hard to find. A tall, rather slim figure, but lissom, wiry and full of vitality; a very high action, an atmosphere of undisguised hostility, and a subtle and unresting brain behind it all. There was never a more thoughtful bowler than the "Demon"; it is said that he would often lie awake at night turning over and over in his mind the best methods of attacking the great batsmen opposed to him. When first he came to England he was a definitely fast bowler, with an extra fast ball, frequently a yorker, up his sleeve; like many of his fellows, he was quick to observe and profit by all that he saw in England, and by 1882 he had moderated his speed to fast medium, but perfected the art of disguising his change of pace. On a fast, true wicket he had not the strength or stamina of a Richardson, or quite the electric quality of Lockwood at his best, but given the slightest help from the pitch, he was, beyond all doubt, what the Champion proclaimed him—the greatest bowler



in the world. Like the famous Yorkshire bowler, George Freeman, Spofforth never overdid his great power of spin : he always aimed at doing just enough to beat the bat and hit the wicket ; but probably his greatest asset was his consummate gift for concealing a change of pace, in which it is possible that Lohmann alone of English bowlers approached him.

Now in 1878, when the Australians first came over, English bowling lay to a great extent under the spell of Alfred Shaw. The preceding decade had witnessed a revolution in method, the great and widespread improvement in grounds, together with the rapid development of aggressive batting, for which W. G.'s example was no doubt largely responsible, had in a very few years almost driven the race of fast bowlers off the cricket field. Their place had been taken by a generation of slow and slow-medium bowlers, who took Shaw as their model, and relied on a perfect length, often at some distance wide of the off-stump. It was the Australians who showed us what could be done by two new factors in attack—the off-break, bowled at a fast pace and in frontal attack on the wicket, and a readjustment of the field. In those days mid-on and square-leg were commonly regarded as places where the comparative “ rabbit ” could be tucked most safely away, and it was a revelation when on the sticky wickets of 1878 Boyle proceeded to take up his position at silly mid-on, often no more than 6 or 7 yards from the bat, and catch men out off defensive strokes to the off-breaks of Spofforth and Garrett. Boyle is the original prototype of the modern “ suicide squad ” and his enterprise marks a decisive step in the process which, in the last 20 years, has orientated the field completely afresh.

In fielding, the Australians of 1878, while earning the outspoken praise of their contemporaries, were not considered superior to the best that we could show, except in throwing, in which, from their first appearance, they were recognized as reaching a standard to which we could not aspire.

At an interval of nearly sixty years it can do no harm if we record the single fact that the whole-hearted enthusiasm of our visitors sometimes involved impatience and resentment at the umpires' decisions when unfavourable to themselves. Umpiring has been something of a difficulty in Australia throughout its cricket history, and the first touring eleven were apt at times to impute to English umpires motives as questionable as those from which they had themselves perforce suffered in their own country. This tendency led to a most unfortunate incident in a match at Philadelphia during their homeward journey, and culminated in the once notorious, if now forgotten, scene on the Sydney ground during the tour of Lord Harris's Eleven in the winter of 1878-1879.

## THE FIRST TEST MATCH IN ENGLAND.

The team which Lord Harris took to Australia in 1878-1879 was originally to have been under the captaincy of I. D. Walker, and to have consisted entirely of amateurs. A family bereavement ultimately prevented any of the Walkers from taking part, and several other gentlemen who had undertaken to go were later obliged to cry off. Lord Harris, therefore, upon whom the captaincy had devolved, was forced to strengthen his attack by including the two Yorkshire professionals, Emmett and Ulyett. The latter, although he took 65 wickets for 11 apiece, was hardly as successful as had been hoped, but Tom Emmett got through a prodigious amount of work, and came out with the splendid record of 137 wickets at a cost of just over 8½ each. The only other bowler of any repute was A. P. Lucas. In batting, with the captain, Lucas, Hornby, Webbe, Penn, and the two Yorkshiremen, the side was strong and constantly scored heavily, but nothing could make up for the shortage of bowling, and not for the last time were Englishmen to find that the best of fieldsmen at home were only too liable to drop catches in the strange atmosphere of the Antipodes. Moreover, they had no first-class wicket-keeper. The programme consisted of only thirteen matches, but it is significant that of the five eleven a-side games three were lost, one each to Victoria and N.S.W., and the other to the Australian Eleven of 1878. In the latter match the chief agent in our downfall by 10 wickets was Spofforth, who took 13 wickets for 110 runs; but the Englishmen were almost equally impressed with Evans of N.S.W., at this time reputed to be the best all-rounder in Australia, but never successful later on in reproducing his best form in England.

The story of the next Australian visit, in 1880, makes very curious reading. In the first place it was not apparently until late in the spring of that year that anyone in England knew for a certainty that the trip would take place. By that time the County programmes were complete, and the Australians found themselves perforce confined, almost entirely, to fixtures with local clubs in the North and Midlands, playing with odds. In all they played thirty-seven matches, but until August they were never really tested on even terms at all except in their two games with Yorkshire, and even those were not sanctioned by the County Club. As a matter of fact, it is an open secret that at one time they were actually reduced to advertising for opponents!

Their early offer to play a representative English Eleven for the benefit of the Cricketers' Fund was refused, and W. G.'s attempt to arrange a similar fixture ended in failure. It was not until the very end of August that, owing largely to the efforts of Mr. C. W.

Alcock, Lord Harris was induced to collect and captain an eleven which was to meet Australia at the Oval on September 6th, 7th, and 8th, in the first of all Test Matches played on our soil. Several of the leading amateurs were by this time scattered over the moors, but the most important of them were reclaimed, and the team that took the field for us was very nearly the best possible. Most unfortunately our opponents were crippled by the absence of Spofforth, who was on the injured list.

W. G. signalized his first appearance in a Test Match by scoring 152, and, with splendid support from Harris, Lucas, and Steel, the total reached 420. When, in spite of plucky batting by Alec Bannerman, Percy McDonnell, and Boyle, the Australians followed on 271 in arrears, and then lost 6 wickets for 170 by the end of the second day's play, it seemed long odds on an innings defeat. Next morning two more wickets fell at once, but then the last two Australians helped their captain to add no fewer than 140 runs. Murdoch was undefeated at the finish, after topping the Champion's score by 1 run. His innings was a masterly combination of defence and clean hitting, and proved once and for all that Australia had learnt her batting lesson with a vengeance. No one dreamt that England would be hard put to it to get the 57 runs needed for victory, but, perhaps unwisely, Lord Harris altered the batting order, and when W. G. joined Frank Penn 5 wickets had fallen to Palmer and Boyle for just over 20. The two amateurs, however, pulled us through.

So ended this, the first of our home Test Matches, in which the Australians gave unmistakable evidence of that power to play an uphill game which has since been perhaps the hall-mark of their cricket. It was a game full of variety, incident, and sensation—watched by over 20,000 spectators on each of the first two days—but, apart from the batting of the Graces and Murdoch, it will perhaps be often remembered as poor Fred Grace's last big match, in which he had the misfortune to "make a pair," but caught Bonnor off a skier so tremendous that the batsmen had completed their second run before the ball was safely lodged in his hand. Within a month he was dead, and England was mourning one of the best-loved and most gifted cricketers of his own or any age.

Before September was over the Australians had wound up their tour by defeating the Players twice, and though Notts had just got home against them by 1 wicket, thanks to a wonderful innings by young Shrewsbury, they could then look back with pride on a tour infinitely more successful than its initial stage had promised. In batting the side showed a marked advance on the form of Gregory's team. Murdoch had, at a bound, reached the very top class, Percy McDonnell, a youngster of only nineteen, had proved himself a magnificent driver, Alec Bannerman's defence was as

stubborn as ever, while he now possessed more strokes, and most of the other batsmen, though still undeveloped in style, could and did get runs at a pinch. Bonnor, with his marvellous physique, won renown as a big hitter, but as yet he had little discretion.

In bowling they had to rely practically on three men—Spofforth, Boyle, and Palmer. The “Demon” was more successful than ever and in a class by himself; Boyle took 250 wickets on the tour, and Palmer proved a more than sufficient substitute for Garrett and Allan. Never can three men have got through a greater amount of work with the ball in a single season. Their collective record works out at :

Overs.	Runs.	Wickets.	Average.
4,768	5,971	909	6·56

Once more did Blackham’s wicket-keeping astonish all who saw it, and the way that day after day on all sorts of wickets he stood up to all his bowlers was a revelation to English cricket. In the Test Match at the Oval he and Alfred Lyttelton together gave the finest exhibition of the art ever known.

The winter of 1881 saw the departure for Australia of the first of the three teams organized and managed by Shaw, Shrewsbury, and Lillywhite. The tour began with a few matches in America, where the Englishmen found the playing conditions most primitive, and the outspokenness of the local critics only equalled by their ignorance. The majority of the matches in Australia were still played against odds, but the “first-class” programme now reached a total of seven games, one against N.S.W., two against Victoria, two with Combined Australia, and two with the famous Australian Eleven which was destined to make history over here in the summer of 1882. In the opening match at Sydney, N.S.W. were comfortably defeated, though Massie played two brilliant innings and Murdoch showed classic form. In the second innings Alfred Shaw bowled for two hours : 29 overs, 25 maidens, 5 runs, 3 wickets !

The second match, against Victoria, provided a considerable sensation. We were 100 runs down on the first innings, and in spite of a great 80 from Arthur Shrewsbury, Victoria only wanted 94 to win in the last venture. Betting was still rife in Australia, and the most extravagant odds—even 30 to 1—were laid on the home side. But the wicket was sticky, and Shaw was so confident in his bowlers that he actually backed us to win, in one of the only two bets he ever made on the game in his life. Peate and Bates dismissed the first six batsmen for 7 runs, and, though Boyle hit pluckily, the end came with a margin of 18 runs in our favour—a great victory indeed.

The first Test Match ended in a draw rather in our favour, though Horan, later the famous “Felix” of Australian cricket

journalism, played splendidly for 124. In the second we were fairly defeated by 5 wickets, thanks to the bowling of Palmer and Garrett, and in the first of the two matches against "The Eleven for England" the same pair of bowlers proved too much for all our batsmen except Shrewsbury (82 and 47), and the margin against us was 6 wickets. In the last match the English batting really asserted itself in totals of 309 and 264 for 2 against Australia's 300, but enough had been seen of our opponents to realize that their batsmen had now collectively reached a standard far in advance of anything they had shown us at home, and that in Spofforth, Palmer, Boyle, and Garrett they had a quartet of bowlers that, given any help by the wicket, would make run-getting a terribly difficult business.

On the English side chief honours fell to Ulyett and Peate. The former hardly bowled at all, but came out with a splendid record as a batsman. His scores in the Test Matches were 87, 23, 25, 67, 0, 23, 149, and 64. Shrewsbury, Bates, and Barlow all did very well. After the latter's 75 at Sydney *v.* N.S.W., a local wag presented him with a belt, remarking, "I thought we had the champion sticker in Alec Bannerman, but you've fairly won the belt." Peate came out with the wonderful record of 264 wickets for 5 apiece, amazing figures for a slow left-hand bowler when the Australian wickets were beginning to approach the standard of excellence with which we are now familiar.

As a business proposition the tour was a great success, but there were some disquieting rumours as to the conduct of certain members of the side, and a persistent report that two of them had actually contracted to "sell" the last innings of the sensational match with Victoria.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE HALCYON DAYS OF AMATEUR CRICKET: 1860-1880

#### THE SCHOOLS.

THE fifties had been a great era for Harrow cricket, as they had won on eight consecutive occasions at Lord's, and though Eton won a solitary victory in 1862, the tide remained set in favour of the Harrovians until the end of that decade. In these years Harrow could show a striking array of school batsmen in W. F. Maitland, C. F. Buller, W. B. Money, A. N. Hornby, and W. H. Hadow. The first-named's innings of 73 out of 119 from the bat in '62 was a wonderful performance. Hadow, the eldest of a notable brotherhood, subsequently played some memorable innings for Middlesex.

Money on the second of the only two occasions on which he represented the Gentlemen, before entering the Church, scored 70 and 109 not out, but both as a school and University cricketer his fame rested on his lob-bowling. His record against Eton and Oxford is astonishing: 10 for 80 in '65, followed by 9 for 50 the next year in the schools match, and 5 for 29 as freshman against Oxford, followed by 11 for 59 in the next match. Curiously enough, he was unsuccessful in his third year both at school and the 'Varsity, but on the four occasions mentioned his bowling was a nightmare to his opponents and virtually determined the match. His lobbs had not only accuracy and spin, but a curiously deceptive flight. At the other end to Money in the Eton and Harrow match of '66 was Frank Cobden.

At Eton there was a dearth of bowling during the sixties, but in Alfred Lubbock and C. J. Ottaway they had two of the best school batsmen in history. The former was curiously unsuccessful in the big match at Lord's until the last of his six innings—a beautiful 60, but he was considered good enough to have played for the Gentlemen whilst still at school, and there have been few more graceful batsmen. In 1863 he scored 174 against Winchester, a score that held the record for the match until beaten by J. L. Guise's 278 in 1921 and I. D. K. Fleming's 202 in 1927. Ottaway, a most brilliant all-round athlete who represented

Oxford in cricket, Association football, tennis, rackets, and running, had, whilst still a boy, an almost perfect defence, and his 108 in the 1869 match played the largest part in at last turning the tide in Eton's favour.

Not only was Mitchell's coaching beginning by this time to bear fruit, but he was fortunate in finding some altogether exceptional material on which to work. Longman and Tabor (what an opening pair !), A. W. Ridley, Harris, the Lytteltons, Walter Forbes, Frank Buckland, the Studds, Hawke, Ivo Bligh, Thornton, and Paravicini. I do not think that in all the history of school cricket can this array of talent be matched from a similar period of ten years. Both Alfred and Edward Lyttelton were brilliant school players and clearly foreshadowed their great success for the 'Varsity and the Gentlemen. Alfred Lyttelton made over a hundred in two consecutive years against Winchester, which is still a record. But strong though the Eton batting was, it was the bowling of Frank Buckland and Percy Paravicini that wrote itself most indelibly on the score-sheets of the great match. The former, a slow medium bowler who came in from leg, played for Eton in '71, '72, and '73. In his three matches against Harrow he took 26 wickets for 230 runs, and in the three with Winchester 36 wickets for 211 ! Curiously enough, Paravicini, who played at the end of the decade, accounted for a similar number, 62 for 534. I do not think that even A. G. Steel or J. N. Crawford can point to greater success in their school matches.

Not unnaturally, Winchester were hard put to it in playing the Eton Elevens of this period, but after a long spell of ill success they triumphantly celebrated the opening of "New Field," or, as it should be called in memory of its donor, "Ridding's," by beating the strong Light Blue side of 1870 by one wicket, and following this up with an 8-runs win on Upper Club next year. These wins were the work of two great school bowlers, Raynor and Moyle. Neither of them did anything at the 'Varsity, but by the general consent of their contemporaries they were dreadfully formidable at school. Moyle bowled left-hand slow medium, kept a beautiful length, and turned the ball sharply ; Raynor was on the fast side of medium, and had a devastatingly late swing, almost a kink in the air, from leg. Lord Harris in his book speaks most warmly of his difficulty. His analyses against Eton are certainly remarkable : in 1869 he got 6 wickets (though his side were beaten by an innings), in 1870 he took 11 for 57, and in 1871 11 for 64.

#### THE UNIVERSITIES.

Passing on now from the three great schools to the University matches of the period, we find honours fairly easy during the

sixties. The Oxford side in 1865, R. A. H. Mitchell's last year, is still thought by many to have been the strongest that University has ever had, comparable with the famous Cambridge Eleven of 1878. Anyway, four of its members played for the Gentlemen that year and four more on subsequent occasions. The most notable figures up to Mitchell's time have already been touched on, but mention must be made of Absolom, who in the last four matches of the sixties took 25 wickets for Cambridge, bowling slow medium of irreproachable length, and subsequently as bowler, hard-hitting batsman, and untiring field doing yeoman service for Kent; also of C. E. Green of Uppingham, who led the Light Blues to victory in 1868, scoring himself 44 and 59, and afterwards was the life and soul of Essex cricket; and of E. L. Fellowes, the Marlburian, who two years earlier took 13 Cambridge wickets for 88 runs, and won Oxford a sensational victory by 12 runs.

The seventies were the most dramatic era in University cricket. They opened with "Cobden's Match":—

Cobden whose name in Cambridge Hall  
The feat unto this day recalls,  
Three wickets with the last three balls  
To win the match by two.

But Cobden's over, on the details of which controversy is not yet stilled, could never have been historic but for the great partnership of Yardley and Dale. Dale was a Tonbridge boy, and one of the last genuine "double-blues" to appear in the match; Yardley was a Rugbeian, and for some years as an amateur batsman stood second to the Champion alone; indeed, when playing in a match with W. G., he would often back his runs against the other's. His style was gloriously free and attractive, and his figures for the University and Gentlemen *v.* Players matches must rival almost any amateur's save R. E. Foster's. When no one else in the Cambridge second innings could make a dozen, these two men put on 116, of which Dale's share was 67. Yardley went on to make exactly 100, and two years later scored 130, a record which stood unrivalled until H. J. Enthoven matched it in 1925.

In the interval S. E. Butler won the match for Oxford almost single-handed: a fast bowler pure and simple, and bowling as he never did before or since, he seemed, on the rough wicket, to make the ball jump or shoot almost at will. In the first innings he took all 10 wickets for 38, and in the second 5 more fell to his arm.

The next year saw another great fast bowling performance, but this time by a Cantab, W. N. Powys, 6 for 26 and 7 for 49; but the foundation of victory had been laid by the Light Blue batsmen on the first day when, apart from Yardley's second century, the two accomplished Eton freshmen, Longman and Tabor, had beaten record by scoring 104 together for the first wicket. This was C. I.



Thornton's last University match. Three years in the Eton Eleven, he had scored consistently well against Harrow, and had won for himself immortality in his last school match at Lord's by hitting a ball clean over the old pavilion into a garden beyond it—a prodigious blow. In the opinion of all those best calculated to judge, “Buns” Thornton was the biggest hitter of all time, in the sense that he hit the ball harder, higher, and farther than any other batsman who has ever lived. He has hit 168 yards from hit to pitch at Brighton, 152 yards at Canterbury, and in an innings of 107 not out at Scarborough he hit a ball from A. G. Steel clean over the very high houses on the south side of the ground into Trafalgar Square beyond them, a feat the report of which prompted a fair admirer to ask, “Oh, Mr. Thornton, was it from Lord's or the Oval?” No wonder, surely, that he has since been presented with the freedom of the borough!

The crushing defeat sustained by Oxford in 1872 was avenged the following year, when in one of those admirable games in which each innings exceeded 150 and none 205, they got home in the end by 3 wickets. For this they were mainly indebted to the splendid defensive batting of Ottaway, who thus put the coping-stone on a remarkable University career. On the Cambridge side the eldest of the Fords, W. J., who subsequently wrote such interesting articles on Public School Cricket in *Wisden*, hit very hard for 51 in the first innings, and another Reptonian, C. Tillard, clean bowled six and caught the seventh Oxford wicket in the final innings.

The Dark Blues followed up their success by a large margin in 1874, and won again in 1875, but this time only by 6 runs after a desperate game, in which the features were the success of Ridley's lobbs at the finish and the opening partnership in which Webbe and Lang, on a rain-damaged wicket, put on 86 for the first wicket. The former thus, as a freshman, justified the great reputation he had brought from Harrow, and also made a historic catch with the left hand when running at full pace at deep square-leg off his old opponent, the Eton freshman, Edward Lyttelton.

1876 was “Uppingham's year” at Cambridge, and the pupils of H. H. Stephenson fairly won the big match. There were four of them in the side, and though D. Q. Steel did modestly, Luddington and W. S. Patterson took 16 wickets, while the former and that great batsman, A. P. Lucas, scored 195 runs between them. Some sympathy must be extended to W. H. Game, who, when all seemed black, played, as a captain should, a gallant if unavailing innings of 109. With the Uppingham contingent intact, and even reinforced by a fifth old boy in the person of S. S. Schultz, and with the two Lytteltons in good form, the Light Blues must have gone to Lord's with high hopes in 1877; but they had reckoned without Frank Buckland, who followed up his extra-

ordinary career as a bowler at Eton with an all-round performance in the 'Varsity match, which has, I fancy, never been beaten except by P. R. Le Couteur's in 1910—117 not out in his only innings and 7 wickets for 52. It was also said that the Cambridge Eleven suffered severely from blistered feet !

By still common consent the Light Blue Eleven of 1878 was positively the strongest University team that has yet taken the field. They won all the eight matches they played ; they annihilated Oxford, though disappointing their admirers in not winning by an innings, and after the 'Varsity match and minus their greatest batsman, A. P. Lucas, they defeated the Australians by an innings and 72 runs at Lord's. Of that team, the Lytteltons, Lucas, and A. G. Steel all played for the Gentlemen, and would probably have played for England had a Test Match been arranged. In batting there was brilliance as well as sound defence, and if the bowling was rather limited, A. G. Steel and P. H. Morton made up in quality for anything that it lacked in quantity. The latter was a Rossallian, a tallish man, rather spare in build, but with very strong back muscles, which enabled him to make the ball whip at a great pace from the pitch and turn sharply from the off. But it was unquestionably A. G. Steel's bowling that made the difference between a good and a great eleven.

Steel had come up from Marlborough the previous October with a great reputation, and, indeed, there are many who maintain that, like J. N. Crawford, he was never a better bowler than in his last year at school. It is at least certain that never has a freshman so dominated a University Eleven, heading both batting and bowling averages and playing an absolutely decisive part in the great match at Lord's. His pace was slow, and yet fast enough to make jumping out to him a matter of great difficulty. He could alter it at will, and had quite a fast ball in reserve. He was a master of the short half-volley, the slow bowler's best-length ball, and he could spin the ball either way, though favouring the leg-break.

Admittedly the season of 1878 was wet, but figures of 75 wickets at 7 apiece in Cambridge cricket, and 164 at 9 each for the whole summer, brook no gainsaying. Even to-day he must be written down as the best leg-break bowler in history, and at a time when the slow leg-break was almost unknown he was, for a year or so at least, the most dreaded bowler in England. In his first University match he took 8 for 62 and 5 for 11 (he and Morton dismissing Oxford for 32 in the second innings), and in the four years in which he played 38 wickets for 283. If he had never made a run, Steel's would have been a famous name in cricket, but he was also a batsman of the very highest class and a brilliant style, who twice made a hundred in a Test Match, here and in Australia. As an all-round cricketer, he must be placed on the very pinnacle of Olympus with,

among amateurs, none but the Champion and the Hon. F. S. Jackson to keep him company.

It was not surprising that the residue of the great 1878 side, reinforced as it was by the first two of the Studds, should have kept the Light Blue flag flying at Lord's for the next two years; but in 1881 the tide turned, and the Oxford captain, A. H. Evans, met with a delayed but richly merited reward. In the whole history of the match no one, perhaps, had worked harder and, indeed, with more striking success before victory came his way. In the three preceding years he had bowled 249 overs for 341 runs and 23 wickets, and all in a losing cause. But at last, in 1881, two Oxford batsmen in W. H. Patterson (107 not out) and C. F. H. Leslie (70) were found to master the redoubtable Steel, and then Evans's bowling—13 for 130—did the rest. Curiously enough, when first he went to Clifton, Evans was by predilection and performance a batsman, but being put on to bowl in an early trial game, he captured a few wickets, and henceforth, whether he liked it or not, a bowler he was to be, and a bowler he certainly became. Very strong and equally determined, pace was no difficulty to him, but added to this was a most formidable off-break, and on any but the very best wickets a most intimidating knack of making the ball "fly." With the exception of G. E. Yonge and C. D. Marsham, both of whom played five years, Evans's total of 36 wickets in the match is surpassed only by Steele's 38, and equalled only by S. M. J. Woods, who was to make history at the end of the next decade. Curiously enough, Marsham and Evans also provide the only instances of University captains whose sons succeeded them in that high office.

Before passing on from this review of University cricket in the sixties and seventies, mention must be made of the jubilee dinner that took place in 1877, and in which six of the original "Blues" met and no doubt fought their battles over again. The then University captains, Webbe and Patterson, made speeches, and the latter called attention to the fact that after fifty years of conflict honours were exactly easy, and prophesied that in another fifty years much the same conditions would prevail.

The year 1875 saw a great addition to the amenities of cricket at Fenner's in the form of the new pavilion, which replaced the old low wooden structure flanking the county gaol. It was over the latter that "Buns" Thornton was once seen to hurl an unsuccessful bat of his into the prison yard beyond "for the benefit of his fellow-sinners there." At Oxford an even more important step was taken, when in 1881 the University clubs migrated from the old and rather distant Magdalen ground to a new and permanent home in the Parks. The University were persuaded to lay down the ground and to vote £2,000 for the building of the pavilion, and the O.U.C.C.

undertook to pay £30 annually as ground rent and a further £100 a year to meet the original capital expenditure. From the same year dates the annual subsidy paid by the M.C.C. to the two University clubs. It is to be noted, however, that Oxford have always been at a pecuniary disadvantage compared with their rivals, the Parks being an open pleasure ground. The O.U.C.C. are therefore debarred from charging any gate money, and have to rely for their income upon members' subscriptions alone. With the many beautiful college grounds now in existence, the appeal of O.U.C.C. membership is necessarily restricted, and the funds available for the payment of professional bowlers correspondingly small. Oxonians have, however, the consolation of a ground that in beauty of surroundings can bear comparison with any in the country.

#### THE GENTLEMEN.

When the Gentlemen and Players' Elevens took the field for their annual encounter at Lord's in 1865, the latter could look back upon a series of twenty-three victories out of twenty-five meetings on that ground and at Kennington Oval. Yet overwhelming as their supremacy had in that period proved, the next sixteen years—1865–1881—were to see the Amateurs assert theirs in a fashion no less decisive. Between those limits, of the forty matches played on the two metropolitan grounds, at Prince's and at Brighton, the Gentlemen won no fewer than twenty-seven and lost but five. At Lord's, when the sides were then, as now, more representative than elsewhere, their victories numbered thirteen, to be set against only a couple of defeats. The pendulum of power had swung with a vengeance, and never again was it found pointing so unequivocally to the supremacy of amateur cricket. Whence, then, came the momentum?

There were, as we have seen, some notable recruits from the 'Varsities at this time reinforcing the amateur ranks; there was, as we shall see, a welcome addition to their bowling strength in the persons of Buchanan, Appleby, and others, and this, too, just at the time when the great era of the classical professional bowlers and batsmen was drawing to a close, the era of Jackson and Tarrant, Willsher and Grundy, of Carpenter and Hayward, Tom Hearne and George Parr; but these factors, though contributory, were not decisive. What the historians call the *vera causa* is not indeed very far to seek; it is written in unmistakable characters on almost every score-sheet, and can be stated in two words—the Graces.

As a matter of fact, apart from a solitary reappearance in 1886, the "Coroner's" connection with the representative matches ends in 1869, and though his bowling—11 for 78—was really the deciding factor in the victory of 1865, his share in the great era was both

modest and short-lived. The youngest brother, G. F., did splendid all-round work between 1870 and 1878. He began disastrously with the bat, bagging a brace at the Oval and scoring but 8 and 3 at Lords, but he took 15 wickets in the two matches, and subsequently proved himself an all-round cricketer inferior at the time to the Champion alone. His record for all these matches works out at over 1,000 runs, averaging 31 with the bat, and 58 wickets for 16 each. He was particularly partial to Prince's, and in his last match there scored a brilliant century. But fine player as Fred Grace was, his performances pale into insignificance when compared with W. G.'s.

In cricket history instances are not wanting of great players who have over a period of years stood out from their fellows in the representative matches in which they played. We may cite the cases of Bradman and Hobbs in Test Matches, of Steel and Woods in the University match, of Alfred Lubbock, Frank Buckland, and J. N. Crawford in inter-school games; but there is nothing approaching a parallel to the way in which the Champion dominated the Gentlemen v. Players fixture. His first appearance in it, at the age of sixteen, saw the Gentlemen at last victorious after nineteen consecutive defeats; forty-one years later he played in it for the last time, scoring in his eighty-fifth match in the series and on his own fifty-eighth birthday 74 runs, the highest score in either innings on his side. In the interval he scored in these matches 6,008 runs, much more than double the total reached by any other batsman, and took 276 wickets, no other bowler, excepting William Lilly-white, Alfred Shaw, and Rhodes having even reached the hundred mark. Of other century-makers in the match Hobbs heads the list of the Players with sixteen, C. B. Fry of the amateurs with four. W. G. made fifteen, impartially distributed between all the grounds—Lord's, the Oval, Prince's, Brighton, and Scarborough—on which the match has taken place. The first of them he scored in 1868, a few days before his twentieth birthday. The wicket was terribly difficult, even for Lord's, the Players' bowling was still very strong, and the Gentlemen, fine batting side though they were, were almost powerless. B. B. Cooper made 28, but no one else could even reach double figures excepting the Doctor, who, going in first wicket down, scored 134, and was still undefeated at the end of the innings. What is more, he followed this up by taking 10 wickets for 81 in the two innings of the Players. Two years later, in 1870, he began a series of astonishing scores. It is almost impossible to select statistics from the Champion's career, but these figures really pick themselves:—

	Lord's.	The Oval.	Brighton.	Prince's.
1870 ..	109 and 11	6 and 215		
1871 ..	50 and 37	16 and 43	0 and 217	
1872 ..	77 and 112	117		
1873 ..	163	158		70

But had the Champion never made a run, he would, as often as not, have been the first choice for the Gentlemen's Eleven for his bowling alone. It is not always remembered that he was originally a straightforward, medium-paced bowler who trusted to good length, direction, and the natural vagaries of the ground to secure him success; nor was his trust in vain, as abundant evidence in the sixties testifies. But—and mark here the perspicacity and adaptability of the great cricketer—with the dawn of the period of the heavy roller and the plumb wicket, W. G. broke away from convention and adopted, and gradually perfected, the “high, home, and easy” style, very much on the model of William Clarke, one of his boyhood's heroes. It is to be remembered that though this was a reversion, it came upon his contemporaries as something relatively new. The slow-flighted ball, dropped on or about the batsman's legs or leg-stump, working a little across the wicket, and reinforced by a revolutionary disposition of the field, bothered a generation whose whole batting training was directed primarily towards meeting fast bowlers and a strictly orthodox array of fieldsmen. Like Clarke, W. G. was a great tactician who loved to play on the batsmen's weaknesses. To his own bowling he was a magnificent field, working across to the off-side immediately after delivering the ball and there bringing off many astonishing “c. and b's.” Everyone knows how he would often station his brother Fred—and sometimes W. R. Gilbert as well—at deep long-leg, and how fatally seductive was the slow, flighted half-volley to leg that he would then serve up to the batsman. But there was another curious and original place which provided him with many victims—an extra mid-on, deep and straight, some 10 yards or more over his own head, stationed to catch the “skimmer” that just cleared the bowler. The most extraordinary of all his feats with the ball was when at Cheltenham, in 1877, he took 17 Notts wickets for 89 runs. As man after man fell to one of the Doctor's leg-traps, Richard Daft grew more and more irritated and outspoken in his criticism, but he had somewhat less to say when, a little later, he went in himself and planted his second ball securely into long-leg's hands. The seventies were the great years for W. G. as a bowler; in that decade he took over 1,200 wickets at a cost of under 14 runs apiece.

More or less simultaneous with the Champion's development, there appeared in the amateur ranks another bowler whose record in the representative match will bear comparison with almost any. David Buchanan, like both Peate and Rhodes, was originally fast left-handed. In his one appearance in the 'Varsity match, in 1850, he had taken 7 wickets, and for the next fourteen years he met with a good deal of success in good cricket. Gradually, however, he came to find that for the best batsmen his existing style of bowling had few terrors. At last it befell that in a match with

the All-England Eleven at Manchester he found himself fairly collared by Carpenter and Hayward, and, remembering how his old cricket colleague, Arkwright, used to get wickets by the arts of spin and flight, he made the experiment of bowling slow himself. It was a success, and from that moment—or at least as soon as he had learned to place his field—Buchanan's slows were among the big factors in English cricket. For the Gentlemen, starting as he did relatively late in life, he bowled in only ten matches, from 1868 to 1874, but in these he captured 87 wickets for under 15 each. He had the natural left-hander's spin, and a tantalizing wide half volley, working still farther away, brought him the wickets of many batsmen who tried to drive him straight or to the off. Probably the performance of which he was most proud was when, in 1872, he consented, under pressure, to play for the Gentlemen at both Lord's and the Oval, though he was then so lame from a strained tendon-achilles that he literally could not run a yard. Nevertheless, in the two games he took 18 wickets for just over 13 runs each! After abandoning representative cricket, Buchanan continued for many years to bowl with immense success in the best club cricket. He was one of the mainstays of the Free Foresters, and a zealous patron of the cricket of Rugby School.

Further reinforcements to the amateur attack were forthcoming towards the end of the sixties, in Appleby of Lancashire, and "Bos" Absolom of Cambridge and Kent, concerning both of whom something has already been said. In batting, W. G. was really almost enough in himself, but in addition to Fred Grace there was a steady stream of exceptional batsmen from the ranks of the Universities, and it is at least questionable whether amateur batting in the match has ever been more brilliant and attractive than in the period under review. On performance, Yardley, Alfred Lubbock, A. N. Hornby, and I. D. Walker led the van; but there were many others, such as W. H. Hadow, Money, Longman, Ridley, and the Lytteltons, whose appearances, if fugitive, were almost equally noteworthy.

In face of this galaxy of talent the Players were hopelessly out-matched. In Alfred Shaw they had, of course, a very great and absolutely reliable bowler, but apart from Shaw and Southerton (the man of many counties), their attack was for the most part composed of fast bowlers, such as George Wootton, Hill, and Fred Morley, all of whom on the improving wickets averaged over 20 a victim in their games. In batting they were much more heavily out-matched. Thomas Hearne, always at his best in this fixture, dropped out in 1869, Hayward and Carpenter a few years later, and George Parr's last appearance had coincided with W. G.'s first. Such gaps could not readily be filled, and it is not too much to say that, on the form shown in most of the matches in the seventies,

only Richard Daft, Jupp, and Ephraim Lockwood could be classed with the best half-dozen or more of the Gentlemen batsmen. These were indeed the halcyon days of amateur cricket ; but with the dawn of the eighties the turn of the tide is in sight, with the rise to power of a new generation of great professional batsmen, Barnes, Bates, Maurice Read, and—*par nobile fratrum*—Arthur Shrewsbury, and William Gunn.



## CHAPTER XV

### ENGLAND *v.* AUSTRALIA: 1882-1890

#### I. THE LOSS OF THE "ASHES."

IN the early summer of 1878 so little was understood about Australian cricket that the President of the Cambridge University Cricket Club could actually be mistaken as to the complexions of the gentlemen then about to engage upon their first tour in the Mother Country. Since then events had moved rapidly. English cricket had received the shock of its life when the visitors routed a representative eleven of the M.C.C. in a single day of that year at Lord's; two years later, in the first Test Match ever played in this country, they had made a wonderful batting recovery and pushed England quite hard in the last innings—and that with their greatest match-winner, Spofforth, a casualty; in the winter of 1881-1882 they had twice defeated the very strong professional eleven captained by Alfred Shaw, and shown such improvement in batting that their all-round strength could now no longer be questioned. In Lillywhite's *Companion* of 1882 there is evidence of the growing realization that we were going to be hard put to it to maintain our unbeaten home record intact, and it is not a little interesting to read an article advocating a Test Trial Match or Matches in order that we might have an England Eleven "in being" before the decisive meeting should take place. Every schoolboy knows—or ought to—how well these anxieties were founded, and how at the end of August English cricket had for the first time in its history to haul down its flag on a home field.

In the opinion of three of the greatest of contemporary judges—W. G., A. G. Steel, and Alfred Shaw—the 1882 Australian Eleven was positively the best that ever visited this country. It is perhaps true that in batting they were still some way behind our own highest standard, and it is very doubtful whether any of them, except their captain, Murdoch, would have been selected that year for England on the strength of batting alone. Nevertheless they had now made an immense advance upon the rather primitive methods of their first tour. Murdoch had claims to be considered, with one exception, the best batsman in the world; Giffen, then on his first tour, was obviously shaping himself on the same sound and classical model;

and Horan was a fine determined player, especially good against fast bowling. Then there was quite as relentless a stone-waller as Louis Hall, Scotton, and Barlow in Alec Bannerman, who batted seven hours for 120 at Scarborough in a Festival Match against IZ. At the other end of the pole they had three very dangerous hitters in Bonnor, Massie, and Percy McDonnell, and in a season of wet weather and bad wickets the value of the trio could hardly be exaggerated. One or other of them nearly always came off, and in half an hour's courageous batting scored 30, 40, or 50 runs, just enough to turn the scale when backed by the supremely good bowling at their side's command.

That bowling was, collectively, perhaps as strong as any that has ever figured on any side. "Spoff" was more deadly than ever, Boyle the personification of steadiness, and Garrett and Palmer at least as good a pair as any England could produce; between them these four great bowlers took 598 wickets for less than 13 runs each. Giffen, who bowled quite brilliantly against the Gentlemen when he took 8 for 49, delivered less than 400 overs in the whole tour, so superfluous was he deemed to the attack. Blackham's wicket-keeping was once again the theme of universal admiration, and he was actually spoken of in one quarter as a positive danger to the well-being of cricket, encouraging as he did by his example the abolition of long-stop! The running and throwing of the side in the field was splendid, but the catching, especially in the slips, was nothing out of the way, nor was the disposition of the field always very happy.

The Australians took their cricket in deadly seriousness; they were keen enough about their success to place it above all the minor distractions that, often in the name of hospitality, threaten the form of a touring eleven; they were—it is permissible to say so at an interval of forty years—equally keen, too keen, about financial considerations. These had dictated their over-weighted programme of thirty-eight matches, extending, with but one solitary break, from the middle of May to September 26th, and accounting in its turn for their persistent refusal to play before noon or after 6 p.m. A writer in the contemporary *Lillywhite* records his considered opinion that, "Unconsciously, and perhaps without any suspicion on their part that such is the case, the Australians have seriously and perceptibly aggravated the symptoms of a commercial spirit in cricket."

The tour opened sensationally enough. Massie, an entire stranger to the conditions of English grounds, received the first ball on the Christ Church ground, Oxford, in bitterly cold weather on May 15th. At lunch he was undefeated with 100 out of 145, and subsequently added a second century in under an hour by one of the most brilliant displays of off-side hitting that have ever

been seen. In the second match, against Sussex, Murdoch even went one better, with the wonderful score of 286 not out, the visitors winning by an innings and 355 runs !

In the last days of May, however, a dramatic reverse was sustained at the hands of Cambridge University, who, it will be remembered, had similarly defeated the '78 side.

This was pre-eminently the match of "the three Studds," who together scored 297 runs out of 393 that came from the bat. In scoring 118 in the first innings and taking 8 wickets in the match, C. T. Studd showed brilliant form, but it is curious that Ramsay, who took 7 Australian wickets in the second innings, was himself Colonial born. This was a most unpleasant check for the tourists, and the fact that Spofforth had hitherto quite failed to get going with the ball added to their anxieties.

In the next match, however, against Lancashire, the Champion County of this and the preceding year, he ran into his best form, and from then until August 12th, over ten weeks' uninterrupted cricket, the Australians never tasted defeat ; their batting steadily advanced, whilst their attack was so strong that each of their famous four could be rested as desired. A very strong batting side of Gentlemen were beaten in a single innings in mid-June, and of the next dozen matches ten were won outright. At last a practically representative eleven of the Players brought the all-conquering invaders to bay at the Oval. Barnes and Maurice Read played splendid innings, Ulyett, Peate, and Morley bowled their best, and an innings and 34 represented the margin in our favour at the finish. The "Demon," however, was not playing in that match. A week later and Cambridge University Past and Present continued the good work in a match chiefly memorable for an astonishing bit of hitting by Bonnor, who actually scored 66 out of 79 in half an hour, and hit the ball four times clean out of the big Portsmouth ground.

These two victories so far restored the public confidence in our cricket that few people regarded the approaching Test Match at the Oval with anything more disturbing than eager interest. The England Eleven was selected by Lord Harris, Mr. Burbidge, and Messrs. V. E. and I. D. Walker, and the names when published must have read well enough to reassure all but the most determined Jeremiahs. The batting seemed overwhelmingly strong ; with the exception of Peate, 24 was the lowest average of any member of the side, and the batting order was so insoluble a problem that No. 10 on the list had perforce to be, in the first innings A. N. Hornby and in the second C. T. Studd. In bowling, Peate and Barlow could both show remarkable figures up to date, whilst Ulyett in the last Australian match with Yorkshire had taken 7 of their wickets for 89, and Steel and Studd had both met with

considerable success with the ball in the games with Cambridge Past and Present and Middlesex respectively.

Most important of all, perhaps, was the fact that Palmer, who had bowled with splendid consistency all the tour, was at this time *hors de combat*. Surely, then, as the crowds streamed into the ground on the morning of Monday, August 28th, all the omens must have seemed favourable, and few of them can have dreamt that before sunset on Tuesday they would have seen "the first flight of the winged victory from the White Cliffs of Albion to the long wash of Australian seas."

When the Australians came down to breakfast in their familiar quarters in the Tavistock Hotel, Covent Garden, the anxieties uppermost in their minds must surely have concerned the weather and the toss. Autumn was hard upon the heels of spring. There had been heavy rain in London on the Saturday, and more again in the early hours of Monday, and it was morally certain that the Oval wicket could not improve. It must then have been no small relief to them when Murdoch beat Hornby, the English captain, with the toss, and at ten minutes past noon, on a ground already packed thick with eager spectators, Massie and Bannerman went down the pavilion steps to face the bowling of Peate and Ulyett. The morning's play brought to Australia nothing but disaster ; at one time six wickets were down for 30 runs, and though Garrett and Blackham then made a plucky stand, only 18 more had been added when the teams left the field for luncheon.

Punctually at a quarter to three the game was resumed, and in the first over young Maurice Read delighted his Oval friends by catching Garrett beautifully at long-off ; twenty minutes later the innings was over, and that for 64 runs, the lowest score that the tourists had made in all their thirty matches to date. Certainly the English bowling had been steadiness personified—fourteen consecutive maidens at one period—and Barlow's figures of 5 wickets for 19 runs in 36 overs were splendid ; but the Australian batting was in several cases nerveless and unworthy of them, and they must have taken the field a sadly chagrined team.

When Spofforth yorked the Champion for a paltry 4, and got Barlow caught at forward point with the total no more than 18, their spirits leapt up again ; but then Ulyett, after an agonizing first over, hit well, Lucas defended with a cool head and a classically straight bat, and the score crept up to within 7 of the Tourists' total, when the Yorkshireman, with something of the light-heartedness that had given him the name and the nature of "Happy Jack," danced out to Spofforth, missed him, and was bowled. From that moment the tide turned ; two runs later Lucas was caught at the wicket, and with Studd clean bowled and Alfred Lyttelton also

captured by Blackham off his gloves, 6 wickets were down and the scores were but equal. Barnes failed, a plucky stand by Steel and Maurice Read then added 26 precious runs, but Hornby only just managed to hoist the hundred before falling to one of the "Demon's" deadliest break-backs. Peate gave no trouble, and the Australians left the field 38 runs down, but comforted in the knowledge that after their batting collapse of the morning they might easily have had to face twice as big a deficit.

The clouds that were gathering as they drove home in their hansoms to an anxious meal and an early bed broke during the night, and a heavy downpour, as they were setting out again next morning, made play impossible until ten minutes past twelve. Barlow, in his interesting book of reminiscences, has recorded his opinion that the conditions were at that time unfit for cricket: the ball was like soap, and the mud in the bowlers' holes so bad that the groundsmen had to remove it with a spade before they could be filled with sawdust. It was Australia's great chance, and splendidly did Massie and Bannerman take it; the latter defended grimly, while Massie took his life in his hands and went for the bowling. Runs came fast in spite of bowling changes, the arrears were cleared off, Lucas missed Massie at long-off, and at point the Champion was seen to be pulling anxiously at his beard. At last Steel induced him to hit across a straight half-volley, and Massie's great innings was over—55 runs in as many minutes out of a total of 66. Clever bowling changes by Hornby soon got rid of Bonnor and Horan, and with Bannerman and Giffen also gone, England began to breathe again; but a little shower eased the wicket a trifle once more, and Murdoch played a captain's innings, only terminated by a brilliant piece of combined work in the field by Hornby, Studd, and Lyttelton, and when the last wicket, Boyle's, fell, Australia was 84 runs on.

George Giffen has told us how in the breathless ten minutes that divided the innings the Australians desperately debated their chance, how Spofforth declared that "this thing can be done," and how they filed down the pavilion steps ready to do or die. A general cheer greeted them, followed by a deeper one still when it was seen that Hornby had elected to open the last innings himself with Grace. Spofforth, at the Vauxhall end, and Garrett began the bowling, and with the score at 15 the "Demon" beat and bowled the English captain. Barlow followed, only to meet with the same fate his very first ball. The crowd was silent, grimly intent, but the next half-hour saw their enthusiasm and confidence revive, for in that time Grace and Ulyett added 36 priceless runs. Thirty-four only wanted, and eight great batsmen to get them. Surely the bitterness of defeat was past. But at 51 Spofforth, who had crossed over to the pavilion end, whips down his extra fast one at Ulyett, the Yorkshireman plays for the break-back which is not





there, just snicks it—Blackham does the rest. Two runs later Grace tries to drive Boyle, just fails to reach the pitch of the ball, and is well caught at mid-off—53—4—32. Lucas is joined by Lyttelton, who hits a splendid 4, and the score creeps up to 60.

Now comes the real battle. Boyle and Spofforth set their teeth and bowl as they have never bowled before ; maiden follows maiden, four of them, eight of them, twelve of them in succession. Then Spofforth whispers to Murdoch and Bannerman, the latter purposely misfields a hit of Lyttelton's, and he is down at the far end facing the "Demon," with the dark background of the pavilion behind that deadly arm. Four more maidens and a devastating break-back shatters his stumps ; the last act of the drama has begun. Steel can do nothing, and at 70 is sucked out by Spofforth's slow ball and caught and bowled. Maurice Read, who had done so well in his first Test Match innings, is entirely beaten by his second ball and 7 wickets are down with 15 runs still wanted. But Lucas is still there, cramped, it is true, by the wonderful bowling, but meeting it with indomitable nerve and resource ; surely he and Barnes and Studd can pull us through together ? Barnes, one of the most brilliant professionals of the day, and Studd, who has already twice topped the century against these self-same terrors. Five runs are added, precariously enough, and then a gasp goes up all round the ground—Lucas has played on. 75—8—5.

Whether Studd was really as nervous as "Buns" Thornton subsequently declared—"walking round the pavilion with a blanket round him"—can never be proved, for the tragic fact is that he never got a ball. Lucas had fallen to the last ball of Spofforth's over, and the first of the next from Boyle jumped up quickly and Barnes was caught at point off his glove. Peate—*spes ultima Troiae*—was a poor, but not a negligible, batsman. He had made 20 in his last innings against the Australians for Yorkshire, and now it only needed one fair hit from his bat and another from Studd's to land England home the winner. Peate, it is evident, means to settle the thing out of hand. He hits his first ball dangerously to leg for 2, is all but bowled by his second, plies his bat like a flail at his third, and knows that it has been his last.

That accomplished writer, Horan, has told us something of the desperate intensity of that last half-hour, how one spectator dropped down dead, and another with his teeth gnawed out pieces from his umbrella handle ; how one English batsman's lips were ashen grey and his throat so parched that he could hardly speak as he passed the writer in the field on the way to the wicket ; how the scorer's hand trembled so that he wrote Peate's name like "Geese." Giffen relates how, when Peate's wicket fell, the crowd sat for a moment voiceless and stunned, and then broke over the ground in one wild rush to cheer the men who had won the fight.



Spofforth was carried shoulder-high into the pavilion, and if ever a man made cricket history it was he that day. Fourteen wickets for 90 runs was his share of the spoil, and at the final crisis he had bowled his last eleven overs for 2 runs and 4 wickets.

*Punch* paid him tribute in the following lines :—

Well done, Cornstalks, whipt us  
Fair and square.  
Was it luck that tripped us ?  
Was it scare ?  
Kangaroo land's "Demon," or our own  
Want of devil, coolness, nerve, backbone ?

At the end of the week the *Sporting Times* published the now historical obituary notice which started the saga of "The Ashes."

In Affectionate Remembrance  
of

ENGLISH CRICKET,  
which died at the Oval  
on  
29th August, 1882.

Deeply lamented by a large circle of  
Sorrowing Friends and Acquaintances  
R.I.P.

N.B.—The body will be cremated, and the  
Ashes taken to Australia.

Immediately after the famous Oval game a strong eleven under the Hon. Ivo Bligh (later Lord Darnley) set out to recover the "Ashes." It could by no means be considered a representative side, for, strong as was amateur cricket at this time, it could not claim a superiority in the ratio of eight to four, as suggested by the composition of this team. The four professionals were Barnes, Bates, Barlow, and Morley; but in a serious collision, 350 miles out from Colombo on their outward voyage, which might easily have ended fatally for the whole ship's company, the latter sustained an injury to the ribs which rendered him almost a passenger for the trip, and was directly responsible for his subsequent early death. Of the amateurs, four came from Middlesex—to wit, Leslie, Vernon, and the two Studds—Surrey and Lancashire contributed Walter Read and Steel, whilst from Kent came the captain and that steady batsman and excellent wicket-keeper, E. F. S. Tylecote. I was very surprised to see it stated in the Badminton volume that "Saint Ivo" was successful in his pilgrimage to regain the "Ashes"; this was not the case. Originally three Test Matches were arranged, to be played against Murdoch's 1882 team, and of these certainly two were won; but in a fourth match,<sup>1</sup> this time against the full strength of Australia's selected on current form, we went down in a very hard-fought game by 4 wickets.

<sup>1</sup> This is controversial: some hold that the rubber was definitely "the best of three matches" and that the additional match should not count. But this view seems hardly borne out by Ivo Bligh's own account of the tour, contributed to *Lillywhite's Annual* of 1884.

The one outstanding feature of the cricket was Bates's performance in the second representative game, in which he scored a dashing 55, and then bowled practically unchanged through both the Australian innings, taking 13 wickets for 102, and incidentally doing the hat-trick. I do not believe the whole series can show a finer all-round feat. Steel, who scored a splendid century in the fourth match, was in wonderful form with both bat and ball. Barlow, in the last innings of the third, clearly settled the issue by taking 7 wickets for 40. The one great weakness in the side was the inability of everybody except G. B. Studd to hold a catch.

Less than five months later the two countries were again at grips. The 1884 Australian side is apt to be ranked on an equality with its great predecessor, but I can never feel that it quite reached that level. Garrett had dropped out from the original great quartet of bowlers, and Boyle had lost some of his form; Massie and Horan were also missing, though Scott certainly proved a most efficient substitute.

As far as results go, they lost seven matches against their predecessor's four, and, most important of all, they did not win a Test Match. But—and a very considerable "but" it is—their programme was much more arduous, and of the three Test Matches played, if they did lose one, they had very distinctly the best of the other two. In the first, at Old Trafford, Boyle and Spofforth were too much for our batting on a mud wicket, and only two typically masterful innings by Shrewsbury saved us with a draw. In the second, with Lord's as the venue for the first time in cricket history, Steel played a wonderful innings of 148, and the bowling of the two Yorkshiremen, Peate and Ulyett, did the rest. For the last match, at the Oval, England fielded a side which George Giffen considers to have been the strongest that ever represented her, at least in the nineteenth century.

The game was played throughout on a hard, true wicket, and it was confidently anticipated that whatever might be the superhuman powers of the "Demon" after rain, the English batting would, under these conditions, firmly assert its superiority. Unfortunately Murdoch won the toss, and no English batsman put his pads on until the late afternoon of the second day; in the interim they had a bowl—every man Jack of them—and Alfred Lyttelton, taking off his gloves and going on with lobs, was infinitely the most successful; W. G. occupied in turn every place in the field; the sun shone with pitiless, but it seemed far from impartial, enthusiasm, and the Australians batted: Murdoch to the tune of 211 (for 46 years highest score ever made in a Test Match in this country), McDonnell and Scott also passing the century. At 3 p.m. on the third day England had lost 8 wickets for 181, and 'there was just a chance

of a collapse in the second innings. At this point Scotton, who had opened the innings and had batted three and a half hours for 53, was joined by Walter Read, it is said in a considerably ruffled temper at having to bat so low. Be that as it may, the next two hours saw an addition of 151 runs for the ninth wicket, and Read past the hundred mark in one of the most brilliant innings ever played in a Test Match. Scotton batted five and three-quarter hours for his 90, and he was left-handed !

And so the "Ashes" were left in England, but, as Lord Harris said after the Australians had routed the South of England in their final match at the Oval, judging from their play, both on a wet wicket at Manchester and a hard one in London, there was little to choose between the strength of the two countries.

## II. AUSTRALIA'S LEAN YEARS.

In the succeeding winter of 1884-1885 a very strong professional team, under the joint management of Shaw and Shrewsbury and Lillywhite, travelled south, and just won the rubber game in five matches. Unfortunately, though there was plenty of good cricket played in the games, the international issue was largely vitiated by a series of unsavoury disputes, first between "Murdoch's men" of the '84 team and Shaw, and later between them and their own State Associations ; suffice it to say that the root of the trouble was money, and the attitude they adopted was roundly condemned throughout Australia. Spofforth was an honourable exception.

The unfortunate result was to weaken almost out of recognition two of the would-be representative sides, so that some of the gilt of victory was necessarily rubbed off the Englishmen's gingerbread. Barnes and Bates were both in fine all-round form in big matches, and the first-named, Briggs, and Arthur Shrewsbury, each scored a century in one or other of the Test Matches. The bowling was very strong, and though Peel was rather more expensive than the rest in eleven-aside matches, his record for the tour works out at the following figures :—

Balls.	Mins.	Runs.	Wkts.	Aver.
7,971	987	2,039	353	5·274

The unfortunate quarrels that had marred the winter of 1884-1885 were the prelude to a black period for Australian cricket ; year after year they cropped up again in one form or another, and year after year, not merely in England but even on their own grounds, the Australian Elevens were sapped of their proper strength by intestine faction. Moreover, this unhappy state of affairs coincided with just that critical period in which the old stalwarts of the original great sides were beginning to drop out, and, as Ivo

Bligh had augured in the winter of '84, new players of the same class were not forthcoming to replace them. The result can be seen in the hard facts that, whereas of the twenty-one Test Matches played down to the beginning of 1886, Australia had won nine as against England's eight, of the next eleven games ten went against her.

The team that, under the captaincy of H. J. H. Scott, reached England in May of 1886 was heralded with something of a flourish of trumpets : it was the first to come here not as a private speculation, but under the ægis of one of the great governing bodies of Australian cricket, the Melbourne Cricket Club. The almost unanimous verdict of the Australian Press had hailed it as at least the equal, if not the superior, of any of its predecessors, and if some of the old faces that had made history in England were missing, the new choices were reported to be highly efficient substitutes. Herein prophecy was sorely falsified, for without an exception they failed, and for the first time we saw an Australian side at its worst under difficult batting conditions, and liable to "crack" at a crisis. Worst of all, in the sixth match Spofforth hurt the third finger of his bowling hand in trying to stop a hard return by Lord Harris, was out of the side for nearly a month, and was never again during the tour anything like his true self. Furthermore, Bonnor was injured at the end of July, and was hardly seen again.

From the start of the tour the weather was all against the visitors, and May brought them but a solitary victory. This bad beginning reacted appreciably on their morale, and, with Scott an inexperienced captain, discouragement set in and the fielding began to deteriorate. They never really recovered. In the first Test Match, at Manchester, they certainly played up pluckily, and only some splendid cricket by Barlow brought England safely home ; with scores of 38 and 30 his aggregate was higher than that of any other Englishman, whilst in the crucial second innings he took in 52 overs 7 wickets for 44 runs.

In the second and third matches, at Lord's and the Oval, the Australians were annihilated. In the first Shrewsbury played possibly the greatest innings that has ever been seen, to which I shall refer in another place, and Briggs ensured an innings victory by taking 11 wickets for 74 runs. At the Oval W. G. and Scotton made 170 for the first wicket, the Champion going on to bring his individual score to the same figure (the highest by an Englishman in a home Test Match until Mead beat it in 1921), and with Walter Read scoring 94 and Briggs hitting brilliantly for 53, the total reached 434. The Australians had only to bat through the Saturday to stave off defeat, but they never looked like doing it. Briggs again bowled well, but this time it was the Surrey idol, Lohmann, who did the damage to the tune of 12 wickets for 104. This defeat by an innings and 217 runs was by far the heaviest ever sustained

by either country in a Test Match in England until the Oval Match of 1934. The one outstanding success of the side was George Giffen, who headed both batting and bowling averages.

This was Spofforth's last tour in England, and if anything more is needed to convince a sceptical generation of his surpassing greatness as a bowler, I append his bowling figures for his five summers over here :—

Year.	Wickets.	Averages.
1878	123	11·46
(In eleven-aside matches only, i.e. less than half the total played.)		
1880	391	5·63
1882	188	12·26
1884	216	12·50
1886	89	17·14
(Injured at beginning of June.)		

In the winter of 1886–1887 the Australians went down in all the Tests before the very strong professional team taken out by Shaw and Shrewsbury, the bowling of Lohmann, Barnes, and Peel being altogether too much for their now sadly deteriorated batting strength ; Lohmann's figures for those games were 25 wickets for 189 runs ! Twelve months later was seen what must appear to us now as the almost incredible spectacle of two English teams touring simultaneously in Australia and, what was more, each defeating Combined Australia, if such a title can fairly be attributed to the unrepresentative and disgruntled elevens that took the field against them. Of the English sides one was organized at the invitation of the Melbourne Club by Lord Hawke, and captained after the latter's return to England on account of his father's death by G. F. Vernon ; the other was a business enterprise by Shrewsbury. Not unnaturally the financial result of both tours was disastrous, though the cricket shown by the tourists was good enough. Shrewsbury himself was in wonderful batting form, twice scoring over 200, and Lohmann was once again almost irresistible with the ball. For Vernon's side, Peel had a splendid record with both bat and ball, but perhaps the most notable feature from an historical standpoint was the introduction to Australia of A. E. Stoddart, destined as a batsman to play a very great part in the international cricket of the future, and as a man to win the heart of every sportsman in Australia.

The sixth Australian team, under the captaincy of Percy McDonnell, embarked amid a chorus of gloomy prophecy ; only Boyle of the famous bowling quartet survived, and he was now an almost negligible quantity. The batting, with the exception of the captain, Bonnor, Bannerman, and S. P. Jones, was almost entirely inexperienced of English conditions, and to make matters worse the last-named caught smallpox soon after his arrival ; worst of all, George Giffen, at this time head and shoulders above all

his colleagues as an all-round player, had refused to join the party. As a matter of fact, though no match for our full strength, the side did quite well. The batting was weak, only one man averaged over 20, but in C. T. B. Turner and J. J. Ferris they had a wonderful pair of bowlers; indeed, if figures go for anything, definitely the most successful that ever appeared together in any touring side, whether English or Australian, in the whole history of the game.

It is usual to-day to suggest that our bowlers are seriously handicapped by an unbearably long programme; no doubt there is a good deal of truth in this, but to those who regard a total of a thousand or so overs as representing more than flesh and blood can reasonably be called upon to meet, the record of Turner and Ferris in the tour of '88 may come as something of a revelation. Necessity, it is said, knows no law, and there was certainly necessity enough, for with the exception of young Harry Trott's leg-breaks—and they were very expensive—there was really no other bowling in the side worthy of the name. They knew that unless and until they got the enemy out, well, they and their fellows continued to field. Bowl they had to, and bowl they did.

	Balls.	Mdns.	Runs.	Wkts.	Aver.
C. T. B. Turner .. ..	10,359	1,222	3,492	314	11·38
J. J. Ferris .. ..	8,890	998	3,103	220	14·23

Together, then, they took 534 wickets, or just 405 more than all the rest of the team put together, and this against the flower of English batting, with hardly a rest in close on twenty weeks' cricket. Admittedly the season was one of the wettest on record, but even so their performances were really astonishing. Of all Australian bowlers, Turner alone may be voted as in the same class with Spofforth; if the latter was the "Demon," he was at least the "Terror." Bowling right-hand medium pace, he had an extraordinary "nip" off the pitch, and herein, in W. G.'s opinion, excelled all bowlers of his acquaintance except George Freeman; his length was splendid, and his break-back so deadly that on sticky wickets he was virtually unplayable—at least by a generation who had not yet begun to adopt "the second line of defence." In one respect Turner ignored the now accepted principles of orthodoxy in bowling: he made no use of body turn, but delivered the ball facing full square to the batsman.

Ferris, who was only twenty-one years old at the time, was left-handed, something after the style of Voce, though on the whole not quite so fast; he could make the ball go either way, but what was most remarkable in so young a bowler was the accuracy he maintained in spite of the immense strain thrown upon him. The opening match of the tour was prophetic of its whole course;

in it only two of the visitors exceeded 20, but they won easily, and Turner and Ferris took all 20 wickets for 161 runs !

Of their many sensational feats three only may be selected : against Lancashire at Old Trafford Ferris took 8 wickets in the first innings for 41 ; against an England Eleven at Stoke Turner took in the first innings 9 for 15 (7 clean bowled, 2 lbw, and the odd man run out) ; whilst against a similar side at Hastings in August his bag was 17 wickets for 50 runs, of which 14 were clean bowled and 2 were lbw !

Of the three Test Matches played in this year the first took place at Lord's on just such a rain-ruined wicket as would best suit the two great bowlers. Lohmann, Briggs, and Peel might well be equally deadly, and the Australians very wisely decided to "chance their arm" and have a hit. They only got 116, but it was a winning score, for 62 was the highest of the other three innings, the English batsmen failing hopelessly in an attempt to wear down Turner and Ferris. In the other two matches, however, the Australian batsmen were seen at their worst ; only once in their four attempts did their total exceed 81, and England won both times by over an innings.

Two years later history more or less repeated itself. Murdoch was persuaded to captain the Australian team, but with Giffen once more declining to come, and half the side again consisting of men with no experience of English conditions, they were too heavily handicapped, and actually lost more matches than they won. Turner and Ferris again did wonders, exactly sharing the 430 wickets that fell to them ; but though they had more support than in 1888, there were no other bowlers of real class. In batting Murdoch did well enough to head the averages, and Doctor Barrett, a left-hander, was an able successor as a stone-waller to Alec Bannerman, and had the distinction of carrying his bat undefeated through the second innings of the Lord's Test Match. But the most encouraging feature of the tour was undoubtedly the form shown by some of the younger men, Lyons and Harry Trott, Hugh Trumble and Gregory, the first pair the connecting files with, the second pair the advance guard of the new army that was destined before the century closed first to recapture the "Ashes" in Australia, and then to defend them successfully in the enemy's country.

## CHAPTER XVI

### COUNTY CRICKET IN THE EIGHTIES

#### I. LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE.

THE development of county cricket can readily be gauged from the fact that in 1870 the regular county fixtures numbered but 22, in 1880 as many as 50. In the latter year Notts were champions, but the following season saw them crippled by one more of those schisms with which the history of Northern professionalism was only too familiar. For its details, as indeed for every conceivable detail affecting the game in Nottinghamshire, I must refer the reader to Mr. Ashley-Cooper's history of that county's cricket; like everything else that he has written, it is the *locus classicus* for the subject. Suffice it to say here, that from contemporary evidence it is quite clear that the secessionists, headed, it is regrettable to learn, by Shaw and Shrewsbury, were unquestionably unsettled by the financial and general status of the Australian Eleven of 1880.

The temporary eclipse of Nottinghamshire opened the way for a short but brilliant ascendancy on the part of Lancashire. In 1881 and 1882 there could be no question as to their supremacy, losing, as they did, only a single one out of twenty-three engagements. In A. N. Hornby they had an inspiring captain, who in the first of those two years was on performance a long way ahead of any batsman in England; in Steel and Barlow two very great all-round players, in Pilling the best of the professional wicket-keepers; there was little or no tail to their batting; the fielding, with Vernon Royle *facile princeps* at cover, had no weak spot, and of the bowling it seems only necessary to say that Nash, Watson, Barlow, and A. G. Steel occupied respectively the second, third, fourth, and sixth places in the first-class averages; whilst Briggs and Crossland were each destined to head the table within the next five years.

Unfortunately this great eleven offered to its rivals two very considerable occasions for attack. Beginning with William McIntyre, the fast bowler of the seventies, the Lancashire executive had embarked upon a deliberate policy of professional seduction with such success that in the year of its first Championships Barlow was the solitary man among the paid players to be Lancashire



born. This, though not long afterwards imitated by Surrey, and now witnessing its *reductio ad absurdum* in professional league football, was at this time a new phenomenon, and gave rise to considerable ill-feeling, especially on the part of Notts, who still possessed the richest, and an apparently inexhaustible, vein of home-born talent. The climax was reached in the winter of '83, when in response to a very provocative Christmas card from the Red Rose, the men of Notts retaliated with a New Year's greeting, which read as follows :—

#### LANCASHIRE COUNTY CRICKET.

The only rules necessary for players in the County Eleven are that they shall neither have been born in, nor reside in, Lancashire.  
Sutton-in-Ashfield men will have the preference.

The occasion for this outburst was the part played in the defeat of Nottinghamshire at Trent Bridge by Crossland's bowling.

Not only had Crossland no proper qualification at all for his county, but his action was perhaps the most questionable that has ever gone unchecked for any considerable period in first-class cricket. When it is added that Nash and Watson, though slow bowlers, were also more than suspect, it is clear that there was plenty of occasion for the second ground of attack.

In the winter of '81 James Lillywhite had written a statesman-like protest against the abuse in his *Companion*. The Australians of the '82 tour had spoken in no measured terms, and in Lillywhite's *Companion* of '84 the Hon. R. H. Lyttelton, V. E. Walker, and H. H. Stephenson also entered the lists, and finally, at the general meeting of the M.C.C., Lord Harris proposed the "absolutely satisfied" clause, and this was incorporated in the "Instructions to Umpires," whose weakness was thought to be chiefly responsible for the continuance of the abuse. The umpires had already, in the previous year, been forbidden to stand in any match in which their own county was engaged, and these two ordinances, together with the very firm stand subsequently taken by Lord Harris himself, seem to have been effective; anyway, the throwing controversy drops out, for the time being, from cricket literature.

Saints or sinners, Lancashire were in their years of Championship a remarkably fine side, and though, with the disqualification of Crossland and the comparative disappearance of A. G. Steel in the mid-eighties, they dropped a little back in the race, they still possessed in Barlow one of the greatest all-rounders of his own or any generation.

If ever a man lived for cricket it was Barlow, as a dip into his interesting, if discursive, reminiscences will clearly show. For twenty years, 1871-1891, he played for Lancashire, and subsequently for many years was one of the most esteemed umpires in

first-class cricket ; he played in all the Test Matches against the '82, '84, and '86 Australian sides, and paid three visits to Australia, when he probably put up a record by not standing down from a single match. To the present generation his name is likely to be most familiar as the greatest of those famous contemporary stone-wallers, Scotton, Louis Hall, and Alec Bannerman. Certainly he was never in a hurry for runs, but with A. N. Hornby so often as his partner the runs came along all right, and often and often did his wonderful defence, based on forward rather than back play, save his county, and, on occasion, more representative sides. Twelve times in county fixtures, and nearly fifty times in all games, did he carry his bat undefeated through the innings, and in at least three Test Matches he played what was practically a decisive part. The performance of which he was himself most proud was in the North v. Australians match at Trent Bridge in 1884. At the beginning of the North's second innings the wicket was so nasty that Spofforth remarked : " Give me the ball and they won't get 60." They got 255, of which Barlow's share was 101, made without a chance in four and a half hours, and in the match he took 10 wickets for 48. For Barlow was a very good bowler, left-hand slow medium, deadly accurate, but not mechanical. With the ball his feats are legion, but the most sensational is surely his hat-trick in the Gentlemen v. Players' match of 1884—W. G., John Shuter, and Walter Read ! He was particularly proud of the fact that he was the only cricketer who had both batted and bowled first for England in one and the same Test Match, a record which, if I am not mistaken, holds good to this day.

In 1883 Lancashire for some time bid fair to land home the Championship for the third successive year, but a disastrous Southern tour in August put them out of the race, and in the end it was Yorkshire that chased Notts home. As this was the only occasion between 1879 and 1893 that Yorkshire was so placed, it may act as a text on which to hang a few remarks about their contemporary eleven. In batting, Ephraim Lockwood was nearing the end of his career, and though Louis Hall and Ulyett were at their best, and there were still five more years' cricket in those two fine players Emmett and Bates, there were darker days ahead when, at the end of the decade, the old vein of talent was seemingly worked out, and no new one of the same quality had yet disclosed itself, when the county sank to almost the very bottom of the Championship list, and when even the Yorkshire crowds grew disgruntled, querulous, and abusive. But for the moment the White Rose bloomed, and their attack was the strongest in England. Peate was at the height of his short-lived but brilliant career, Peel had just " arrived," and in young Harrison they had just discovered the only first-rate professional fast bowler in England other than Crossland. In his

very first season in county cricket he took 100 wickets for under 14 apiece, and his bowling was for a time the talk of England ; unfortunately his action, like the Lancastrian's, was called in question, and his striking promise was never fulfilled. Peate only bowled eight seasons in county cricket, but during that time took over a thousand wickets at an average cost of a little over 13 each. As a boy he bowled fast, and " Old Ebor " tells us that his first professional engagement was in a performing troop of cricketing clowns, who were mobbed off the ground by the Sheffield "grinders." A short experience of club cricket convinced him that he bowled better slow than fast, and from his second county match, in which he took 12 wickets, he never looked back. In 1882 he was easily the best bowler in England, his record being 214 wickets for 11 apiece, and it is the opinion of those who have watched Yorkshire cricket most closely and longest, that of the great trinity of slow left-handers, Peate, Peel, and Rhodes, the first was also the greatest. On his own confession, Peate never tried to spin the ball very much, though he could turn it either way at will ; but his length was wonderful, and he was a great artist at fighting the ball.

## II. THE ASCENDANCY OF NOTTS.

### *Gunn and Shrewsbury.*

For the greater part of the eighties Notts virtually monopolized the Championships with an eleven of extraordinary talents. Champions in 1880, they were bracketed with Lancashire in 1882, and for the next four summers their triumph was uninterrupted and complete. In those four seasons they played forty-three county matches, and were only twice defeated.

From his accident on board the *Peshawur en route* for Australia in 1882, Fred Morley had never recovered, and after a practically blank season in 1883 he died in September of the following year at the tragically early age of thirty-four. For nearly ten years he had been the best fast bowler in England, and a worthy successor for his county of John Jackson and J. C. Shaw. His great performances, tabulated by Mr. Ashley-Cooper in the Nottingham book, have really to be read to be believed. Fortunately for Notts, there was a useful understudy available in Walter Wright, who did very effective work for that county until 1886, and subsequently for another dozen years for Kent. Wright was never a great bowler, but his name is to be remembered, for he was about the first accepted "swerver" in relatively modern history. To help Wright there was another fastish bowler in Barnes, whose bowling won at least two Test Matches. The real strength of the Notts attack in those years of triumph lay in its slower bowlers. Flowers, an admirable

all-round player who was the first of all professionals to make 1,000 runs and take 100 wickets in one season, bowled big off-breaks in the style subsequently associated with Ted Wainwright. Shaw was still accurate, if not as deadly as before, and as he gradually dropped back a new star rose into the sky in the person of "Dick" Attewell. In accuracy he was almost his forerunner's equal, and if not the apostle, he was at least one of the greatest exponents of the new doctrine of the off-theory, of which we shall have something to say later. In one respect at least the wretched schism of 1881 was a blessing in disguise, for it gave Attewell his chance as a young bowler, and he took it with both hands. For fifteen years he was the mainstay of his county's attack, and in that time he took 1,720 wickets.

Strong though the Notts attack was in the mid-eighties, I think it was their batting that really lifted them above their rivals. When Scotton played his famous innings of 34 in three and three-quarter hours in the Oval Test Match of 1886 he exasperated *Mr. Punch*, who took him to task in the well-known lines :—

And the clock's slow hands go round,  
And you still keep up your sticks.  
But, oh, for the lift of a smiting hand,  
And the sound of a swipe for six.

Block, block, block,  
At the foot of thy wickets, ah, do !  
But one hour of Grace or Walter Read  
Were worth a week of you !

It is true that, after a season or two of dashing cricket, his methods became a weariness to the flesh, but many a time must his county have blessed his patience, and many a bowler broken his heart in face of that everlastingly straight bat.

An excellent foil to Scotton was Barnes, a sparkling player who batted as if he loved it, as indeed he did. Twenty-one times did he represent England in Test Matches, and almost always with success, especially in the 1884-1885 tour, when his innings of 134 on a bad wicket clearly won the first Test Match that was ever played on the Adelaide Oval.

There were several useful batsmen in the body of the side, including young Harry Daft, son of the great Richard, but head over shoulders above their colleagues stood out the dominant figures of Arthur Shrewsbury and William Gunn.

I remember very well Mr. H. D. G. Leveson-Gower telling me of a conversation he once had with W. G. one night during the opening months of the war at the latter's home in Eltham. The Champion had been asked to name the greatest batsman with whom he had been associated in the fifty years of his unique cricketing life. With a stroke of his silvery beard and an inimitable

twinkle of those bright eyes from behind their bushy brows, he had, with little persuasion, agreed that he himself should be considered *hors concours*, but as regards the *proxime accessit* his answer came quick and decided, "Give me Arthur!" No more convincing evidence can surely be imagined.

Modelling himself as a boy on the classic style of Richard Daft, Shrewsbury from his very first appearance at Lord's in 1873, at the age of seventeen, for the Colts of England against the M.C.C., left no room for doubt as to his class. Two years later he won a regular place in the County Eleven, and never afterwards looked back. Blessed with anything but a robust constitution, he had something of a struggle to keep fit, and throughout the whole of his career he would make any sacrifice that would enable him to sleep in his own bed at home, away from which he rarely got a full night's rest. But a winter in Australia in 1881-1882 did great things for him physically, and on his return his success steadily increased, until in 1887, with an average of 78 for an aggregate of 1,652 runs, his supremacy defied comparison.

A great player on all wickets, it was on difficult pitches that he was seen at his very best; his mastery of the back-stroke, which he played with a good deal of wrist action rather than in the now popular dead-bat method; his capacity for watching the ball right on to the bat; his inexhaustible patience—these combined to make him probably the greatest batsman on sticky wickets that has ever lived. For, indeed, some of the best contemporary judges are agreed that some of his innings under these conditions could have been played by no other batsman, not even the Champion himself. Of these the most notable were perhaps his 164 in the second Test Match of 1886, his 81 not out (batting throughout the innings) for the Players against the Gentlemen in 1891, and his 106 and 81 in the first Test Match of 1893. All three were played at Lord's, where he was always at his best, and all three under the greatest possible difficulties. The first of these innings has been described by both Lord Harris and Barlow as positively the finest they ever saw. It lasted seven hours, was played on three different types of wicket—fiery, slow, and sticky—and against Spofforth at his very best. In his 81 against the Gentlemen he was batting on each of the three days on a rain-ruined wicket, and the next highest score was Abel's 18; whilst the great double in 1893 was accomplished against the redoubtable C. T. B. Turner, the "Terror," on a wicket that always gave that great bowler considerable help.

In the whole of his career Shrewsbury made fifty-nine scores of over a hundred in first-class matches, and of these ten passed the 200 mark. In 1892, Mr. Ashley-Cooper tells us, he was engaged at the beginning of the season to coach the Warwickshire players, and every day would bat against them in the nets for half

an hour. To encourage the bowlers he would place half a sovereign on the stumps, but never once in all the month he was there did he lose his money ! A good many years later—and this for a sceptical generation—he met Sydney Barnes at his best in a private match, and on a desperately difficult wicket, but carried his bat through the innings, playing, we are told, as confidently and well as though the wicket were good and easy.

It is an old story how in the days before the tea interval Shrewsbury, if not out at luncheon, would generally remark to Kirk, the Trent Bridge attendant, as he went in to bat, “A cup of tea at half-past four, please,” and how often Kirk had to carry the cup out to him. In every sort of representative game he was consistently successful, and his form in Australia was as fine as at home. Mr. Warner, in his *Cricket Reminiscences*, tells us that Tom Wass first attracted attention at Trent Bridge by bowling Arthur Shrewsbury out at the nets, a thing that had not been done for years ! Of a naturally serious turn of mind and a reserved disposition, he enjoyed the respect and admiration of everyone associated with him, and when in the spring of 1903, believing himself to be suffering from an incurable malady, he took his own life, the world of cricket recognized in universal tribute that one of the greatest figures in the game’s history had passed on.

It was an old saying that when Notts won the toss at Brighton in the nineties the latter half of their batting order would go off to the sea to bathe, confident that they would not be wanted again that day. There is certainly colour for the story, as in each of the first two years of that decade Arthur Shrewsbury and William Gunn engaged in a partnership against Sussex of over 300. Shrewsbury and Gunn, Gunn and Shrewsbury—for in the minds of their contemporaries the question of precedence never arose—no pair of batsmen, not even Hayward and Hobbs in the years before the war, created such a feeling of the hopelessness of human effort in the minds of their adversaries. Of William Gunn, Mr. Neville Cardus has happily written that “his was the batting of felicity,” the full and perfect exemplar of the classical mode : in him Fuller Pilch came to life again, and since his day no batsman has so combined power and orthodoxy and grace. A magnificent man physically—for years one of the greatest forwards in professional football—he could have rivalled Bonnor in pure hitting, but arguing as he did that “if I start lifting the ball I rarely get more than 40,” he set himself to eschew the spectacular, and even when 50, 100, or 150 had come his way, he would still bat on unmoved, unalterable, Olympian.

Besides the two partnerships mentioned above, Gunn three times helped to add over 300 runs for a single wicket, while in 1889, for the M.C.C. v. Northumberland, he and Attewell put on

419. In *Gentlemen v. Players* he was consistently successful, twice, like Shrewsbury, scoring centuries in the game at Lord's, whilst his batting in the Lord's and Manchester Test Matches of 1893 reached a very high standard. His score of 228 for the Players in 1890 was the highest ever hit against the Australians in this country, until Hutton made 364 in the Oval Match in 1938. Of Gunn's 228 Sydney Gregory was heard to say that the only time he had ever felt tired of cricket was when he listened to Billy Gunn saying "No" for nine hours and a half!

No review of Nottinghamshire cricket during these halcyon days would be complete without mention of Sherwin, who for fourteen years was hardly ever absent from his post behind the stumps: historically he has always been rather overshadowed by Pilling and Blackham, his contemporaries, but on the evidence of figures he need fear no comparison, capturing, as he did in those years, 180 stumps and 513 catches, or an average of very nearly fifty victims every season.

From what we have seen in this chapter, it will be obvious how marked was the ascendancy of the North over the South in this period. Not, indeed, in batting, for, taking the averages of 1883 as a guide, we find eight Southerners—all amateurs, be it noted—in the first dozen of the table; but it is bowling that wins matches, and here the evidence is overwhelming. Of fifteen bowlers who averaged under 20 for 50 or more wickets in that year, twelve were professionals from Notts, Yorks, or Lancashire! There might still be a bat in every bacon-rack of the Southern villages, but for the David Harris and "Lumpy" Stevens of the age it is necessary to look in the sheds and alleys and factory-girt fields of Lascelles Hall, Yeadon, and Sutton-in-Ashfield. But a change was at hand that should more than restore the balance.

### III. SURREY'S RECOVERY.

*George Lohmann.*

There have been few finer county elevens than the Surrey team which Miller captained in the late fifties and early sixties, but as one after another the great figures of that combination dropped out, the shadows of failure and gathering discouragement began to settle down upon the Oval. The seasons of 1880 and 1881 saw them at their deepest. Jupp and Humphrey, in batting for many years so strong a bulwark, had reached the end of their careers; Pooley, worthy successor to Lockyer behind the wicket, knew that his hands could no longer stand the strain, and in attack the solitary reliable performer was Barratt, possibly the slowest bowler that ever lived. And yet the gloom was not quite unrelieved. Walter Read had just been appointed assistant secretary to the club, and



G. Giffen.



George Lohmann.



Lord Harris.



George Hirst.







so enabled to play regularly throughout the season ; two young professionals, in Maurice Read and Abel, held out some promise, though the latter was at first played more on account of his fielding than anything else ; above all, John Shuter had undertaken to captain the side regularly in the ensuing summer. A dashing batsman and splendid fielder, he had won experience and fame alike as a leader of men at Winchester, and there can be no doubt that his personality was a very great factor in the Surrey revival.

His first two years of regular office brought to the captain considerable encouragement. In C. E. Horner, of Cheltenham and Oxford, he found a really capital fast bowler—surely one of the best that never got a “blue”—and in the steadily improving form of W. E. Roller and the brilliant promise of the Clifton schoolboy, K. J. Key, he saw the batting strongly reinforced. But it is the year 1884 that really marks the decisive turning-point, witnessing as it did the first appearance in the Surrey ranks of Harry Wood and George Lohmann.

The former will never be rated in the absolute first flight of wicket-keepers, but for steady workmanlike efficiency he was very hard to beat. Almost without a break he kept for his county for sixteen years, and for the greater part of the time to fast bowling ; quite towards the close of his career—in 1896 and 1897—he made over fifty catches in each season, chiefly off Lockwood and Tom Richardson.

George Lohmann was the very personification of cricket. With his fair moustache and hair, his wide blue eyes set rather far apart, his broad shoulders, yet lithe and supple frame, he was a wellnigh perfect example of the Anglo-Saxon type ; his whole heart was in the game, which, indeed, he loved not wisely but too well, crowding into thirteen years more work than even his magnificent physique could stand. From the very outset there was no question as to his class. Given a trial towards the end of 1884, in the next season he leapt straight into fame, capturing over 150 wickets in county matches for just over 13 each. From that moment his name was made, and from that start he never looked back. For eight years he was incomparably the most successful bowler in England, capturing in each of the seasons '88, '89, and '90 over 200 wickets.

We have the testimony of both W. G. and C. B. Fry that Lohmann was the best medium-paced bowler they had ever met, a combined verdict, it will be noticed, that embraces half a century. In an age still wedded to the formalism of length, he was the first English bowler really to master the revolutionary lessons of Spofforth, and to make length the handmaid of variety in pace and spin and flight. He was on the slow side of what we now call medium ; he could break the ball back as he chose from the off, could bowl a leg-

break at will, and always had in reserve the ball that looked like spinning but went straight on. But subtlety of flight was his greatest asset ; with his very high delivery he was always dipping short of what the batsman expected ; he could suck him out with his held-back slow ball, or get him driving at the half-volley which somehow " swam " on into a yorker. A gallant, dashing batsman, and possibly the finest slip-fielder that the world has known, Lohmann stands out as a match-winning cricketer with whom very few can compare. His bowling record in Test Matches against Australia, 77 wickets for 13 each, is extraordinary. No one, not even Sydney Barnes, took his wickets so cheaply.

Though Lohmann was assuredly the mainspring of the revival, the county owed a good deal to their three new fast bowlers, Bowley, Beaumont, and Sharpe, whose careers were all short, yet long enough to see the Championship almost domiciled at the Oval, and to hold the fort until the coming of Lockwood and Tom Richardson.

In batting as in bowling, Surrey in their great years were blessed with one pre-eminent match-winner, Walter Read, incomparably the greatest run-getter in the county's history up till that date, and probably the finest batsman that had appeared in its ranks since William Beldham. In him defence and attack were admirably combined, and it is a question whether any amateurs, with the exception of W. G. and C. B. Fry, have excelled him for consistency over a long period of years ; but most of all will he be remembered for the power and frequency of his driving, at first straight and to the off, but towards the end of his career favouring the pull, of which he became the greatest known exponent, and eventually something of a slave. In 1887 he twice made scores of close on 250 within a single week ; his 338 against Oxford, made in the following year, is, with the exception of Abel's 357 in 1899, the highest score ever hit upon the Oval.

For a few years at the end of the eighties Surrey probably possessed, in Read, Key, and Shuter, a stronger trio of amateur batsmen than could be claimed by any other county. Maurice Read had been recognized as a dashing player up to Test Match form, to say nothing of being a wonderful fielder in the country ; and Abel had now developed that inexhaustible talent for run-making which was to make him one of the greatest opening batsmen in the history of the game. Who that has ever seen it can forget that curious little figure, surmounted almost invariably by a somewhat faded and shrunken chocolate cap, the slow, half-waddling gait that marked its progress to the wicket, the upright yet apparently rather limb-tied stance, and then the wonderful mastery over every type of bowling, except perhaps the very fast and very slow, and the inexhaustible patience that made the century only a mark to reach and leave behind ?

Such were the men who wrested for Surrey the Championship in 1887, for the first time since the official institution of the competition. In the early nineties came Lockwood, Richardson, and Tom Hayward; no wonder, then, that for nine years the "blue riband" only once left the Oval. This record is unrivalled, and whatever may be the fortunes of Surrey cricket in the future, its supporters can always look back to the time when their county stood unchallenged and alone. There have been famous phases of ascendancy both before and since: Surrey itself in the age of Beldham, Sussex for a short spell about 1827, Kent under Fuller Pilch and Alfred Mynn in the early forties, Notts in the palmiest days of the All-England Eleven, and again in the period recently under review, Lord Hawke's famous Yorkshire sides at the beginning of this century, and their successors' triumphs since the war—great days all of them, and mighty men, but never greater or mightier than when a statue of victory at the Oval might aptly have been wingless.

#### IV. THE OTHER COUNTIES.

Middlesex had actually headed the county list in 1878, thanks to preserving an unbeaten record in a modest programme of six matches, but a quarter of a century was to elapse before she was to match that success; with her it was the old, old story, plenty of batting but no bowling. With her full side available, the metropolitan county was, in the eighties, as strong a batting combination as any. I. D. Walker, A. J. Webbe, who succeeded the former as captain in 1885, the Studds, the Lytteltons, two Fords, G. F. Vernon, and at the end of the decade Sir Timothy O'Brien, Stoddart, and the youngest and greatest of the Fords: this was indeed a wonderful array of batsmen, and almost without exception they were of the brilliant and aggressive type. In 1887 Webbe was surpassed among English batsmen by W. G. and Shrewsbury alone, and within the space of ten August days twice carried his bat through the innings, for 192 against Kent and 243 against Yorkshire: withal he was an inspiring and beloved captain. But all his efforts could not make good the lamentable weakness in attack, which, for the most part, was entirely in amateur hands, and in 1885 suffered a final blow by the departure of C. T. Studd to take up missionary work abroad. George Burton, a steady but never dangerous slow bowler, worked very hard for them for ten years, but he was the solitary professional of any account until the era of Rawlin, J. T. Hearne, and Trott.

Kent had a chequered career during the eighties. At their best, as in 1884, when alone of the counties they beat the Australians, they were a strong, all-round eleven. But ill-health robbed them of two good amateur bowlers in Penn and Cunliffe, whilst Stanley

Christopherson, at one time the only fast bowler in the South, broke down in 1886. Like Yorkshire, they nearly always had a left-hand bowler, Jimmy Wootton, Walter Wright, after his secession from Notts, and "Nutty" Martin being the faster precursors of Blythe and Woolley. George Hearne and his young brother, Alec, were two very hard-working and most useful all-round players, W. H. Patterson was a great batsman, and Lord Harris, both in batting and captaincy, was a host in himself. Tylecote was little inferior to Pilling as a wicket-keeper and a first-rate batsman to boot, and when he dropped out there was M. C. Kemp (the "Bishop") to take his place. There was plenty of individual talent, and yet the side fell short of real success, chiefly, it would seem, from the inability of the best batsmen to play regularly together.

Of Sussex, once so great when the "Nonpareil" and James Broadbridge led the van of progress, it can also be said that had they been able to command consistently the services of their best players, their batting would have been quite formidable, but the bowling never good enough to make them anything of a match for the shires of the North. With James Lillywhite dropping out of the side at the beginning of the eighties, the attack languished, and the only personality of interest was Walter Humphreys, on the whole a very successful lob-bowler, and one of the slender historical links between V. E. Walker and D. L. A. Jephson. In batting, F. M. Lucas made a meteoric appearance, and was, for one year, 1885, one of the most brilliant batsmen in England; but he died two years later, and it was left to the two old Ardingly boys, Newham and George Brann, to hold the fort in batting until Fry and Ranjitsinhji came to take the burden off their shoulders.

Gloucestershire was still the county of the Graces, but neither E. M. nor the Doctor could play as regularly in the eighties as of yore, whilst G. F.'s death in 1880 was a dreadful blow. Frank Townsend and Moberly could only play in August; Midwinter, the only cricketer who has ever played for both England and Australia, had returned to the latter country in the winter of 1882, and the great days of 1876 and 1877, when the county were Champions, slipped farther and farther back behind the horizon. Woof, for so many years the able and respected coach of Cheltenham College, began in 1880 a longish period of loyal and successful work as a slow left-hand bowler, and was reinforced a few years later by Fred Roberts; but neither in batting nor bowling did the cricket of the county reach a high standard until, in 1898, C. L. Townsend and Gilbert Jessop, together with the Champion in one of his remarkable "Indian summers," raised it to the proud position of third in the table.

## CHAPTER XVII

### AMATEUR CRICKET IN THE EIGHTIES

#### I. THE SCHOOLS.

THE great generation of the Lytteltons and the Studds had at last come to an end at Eton: Paravacini played his last match in 1881, and for a time the vein of bowling seems to have been worked out, though the batting, especially in the middle of the decade, was strong. Harrow, on the other hand, had good all-round sides, with the result that between 1878 and 1892 they were only twice defeated in the great match at Lord's. The year 1885 saw the cricket of both schools at a high level, no fewer than ten of the players engaged subsequently gaining their "blues." Eustace Crawley and A. K. Watson put on 235 for the second wicket—the highest partnership yet recorded in this match—and Harrow only required 93 to win in the last innings; but so well did Bromley-Martin bowl that 20 were still needed when the seventh wicket fell, and only a heroic innings by the captain, E. M. Butler, got Harrow past the post just on time. Crawley was in great form again next year, but a century by C. P. Foley for Eton determined the issue.

The next year saw the advent of F. S. Jackson and A. C. MacLaren, surely the greatest pair of batsmen who ever figured together in a school eleven. They were on the losing side, but MacLaren, then only fifteen and a half years old, played two innings of 55 and 67 which set the cricket world talking. He never found any form at all in 1888, but some splendid all-round cricket by Jackson, materially assisted by a century from R. B. Hoare, brought Harrow home easy victors, and inspired their poet laureate, E. E. Bowen, to do honour to their great cricketers in the lines familiar, I hope, to at least every Harrovian, and entitled "A Gentleman's A-Bowling."

To one Etonian at least our sympathies are due, for a man who takes 14 wickets in a match for 99 runs and is still on the losing side must be held unfortunate; yet this was the fate of H. W. Studd, who, with Bromley-Martin and Bromley-Davenport, must be accounted the only considerable Eton bowlers of the decade.

Jackson celebrated his captaincy that year by playing a large part in another comfortable win; but perhaps the most remarkable

innings played in the match since Webbe's batting in 1874 was the 76 by MacLaren when captain in 1890. The wicket was difficult, he had practically no support, but he made his runs out of 120 in 115 minutes without a mistake, and in a form that won him an invitation to assist Lancashire in August, a decision which he promptly justified by playing an innings of over a hundred against Sussex in his first match for the county.

If Eton had the worst of matters with Harrow in the eighties, they were rather too good for Winchester, though the latter had a short spell of triumph in 1882 and 1883, thanks to a pair of bowlers as famous in Wykehamical tradition as Raynor and Moyle of the early seventies.

Nicholls and Swayne, in the three matches in which they bowled at Eton, took, respectively, 21 wickets for 187 and 24 wickets for 185—that is to say, all but 10 of those that fell in the three games, for Eton, after losing very badly in the first two years, had their revenge by 5 wickets in the third. Winchester thereafter had to wait five years for a victory, but it came at last, in 1889, when Eton, on their own ground, were outed for 64 in the last innings, thanks very largely to fielding, “which has never been surpassed by any eleven either for a University or in an international match.” Of the 1887 and 1888 Winchester Elevens, four members subsequently played for Oxford, amongst them the Hon. F. J. N. Thesiger, who captained the Dark Blues, and was, I think, the first Wykehamist to be President of the M.C.C. since the famous amateur bowler of the forties and fifties, Sir Frederick Bathurst.

Rugby had in 1879 and 1880 a really good school batsman in C. F. H. Leslie, who was to fulfil his promise later, and a few years afterwards a most successful fast-medium bowler in R. A. Wilson ; but on the whole they were not quite a match for Marlborough, who had in E. H. Buckland, a fine bowler, and in 1889 an unbeaten side. Following upon their great era of the early seventies, Uppingham unearthed in H. Rotherham one of the greatest school bowlers of all time—indeed, I have searched in vain for any record in big school cricket to set against his figures for 1878–1879—101 wickets for 7·23 and 98 wickets for 4·38. Prodeegious ! Unfortunately Rotherham did not go to the University, but in his first summer after leaving school he was played for the Gentlemen at Lord's, and in his first attempt took 5 wickets for 41.

For their great rivals, Repton, the eighties were really the beginning of cricket renown. They were a good side in 1882, and for the next three years, in all of which they defeated Uppingham. The big names here are Lionel Ford, lately Headmaster of Harrow, and at that time a most “venomous” hitter ; Alfred Cochrane, a left-handed bowler who subsequently did well for Oxford and played for the Gentlemen ; and Francis, the youngest of the Ford brothers.

The latter, besides being an admirable batsman in the style that subsequently delighted so many thousands at Lord's and elsewhere, was then a very good left-handed bowler, who in 1885 took 69 wickets for 10 apiece, whilst averaging 45 with the bat. Three years later saw the two Palairêts and Charles Fry. The former pair, already a joy to the eye on the classic model taught them on their home lawn by Dick Attewell, the latter cramped and ungainly, but already showing that infinite capacity for taking pains, which in his case at least was soon to be recognized to be tantamount to genius.

Malvern will forgive me if I say that at that time their cricket was at a very low ebb, so low that I believe lawn tennis was for a year or two a serious rival. Of the fifteen matches played with Repton between 1876 and 1890, all but one were won outright by the latter. But in 1887 Charles Toppin took over the management of Malvern cricket, and from that moment their eventual recovery was certain.

Of other outstanding school players of the period I can do no more than mention one or two. Charterhouse produced in C. W. Wright the best of all their batsmen to that date, and a very good wicket-keeper too, whilst at the end of the eighties E. C. Streatfeild began his brilliant career as a school and University player. Contemporary with Wright was K. J. Key at Clifton, who made history at the Oval in the August after he left school, and H. V. Page, Cheltenham's greatest all-round cricketer. Three years later Sam Woods appeared at Brighton, and proved at once that Australia had sent us a physical phenomenon altogether out of the ordinary—probably no faster bowler ever appeared in school cricket.

## II. THE UNIVERSITIES.

In University cricket during the eighties the pendulum swung to and fro, the results in each case being curiously decisive. We have seen how in 1881 A. H. Evans brought his four years' career of splendid effort to a triumphant close by taking 13 wickets at Lord's and defeating what was really one of the strongest Cambridge Elevens. But for the next two years the Studds took charge, and Oxford were never really in the hunt. G. B. Studd made a very good hundred in 1882, and brother C. T. had at this time no superior amongst amateurs as an all-round player. He was an upstanding, fine driving batsman, who, like A. P. Lucas, always used bats with an abnormally long handle. As a bowler he was the only amateur to rival the professionals in accuracy; he bowled slow medium from a great height and with a pronounced off-break. The three Studds, G. B., C. T., and J. E. K., captained Cambridge in successive years, as did the Ashtons forty years later.



Oxford had their revenge in 1884, when they put into the field a remarkable side, one of the best they have ever turned out. There were seven freshmen amongst them, and yet they won all but one of their matches, and beat both the Australians and Cambridge by 7 wickets. A great deal of their success was due to the spirited leadership of M. C. Kemp. Cambridge, under Hawke, exactly reversed the tables next year, Wright of Charterhouse, and Bainbridge of Eton, making 152 for the first wicket, and Toppin, then a freshman, bowling fast and well. Wright was a very good University batsman on classical lines, played in the match four years, and, with a century in 1883 and 78 in 1885, totalled the biggest aggregate for it up to that date.

H. V. Page, like Evans and Kemp before him, led Oxford to victory in the last of his four years. He had played some courageous cricket on previous occasions, scandalizing some of the critics by his pulling; but this year it was Key and W. Rashleigh who clearly won the match. Together they put on 243 for the first wicket; each made 100—Key's 143 being then the highest yet recorded in the game—and nobody else on the Oxford side got into double figures!

Oxford repeated the victory in 1887. Eustace Crawley, who had made a century for Harrow at Lord's in 1885, followed it up with another for Cambridge—a record unequalled until A. W. Allen duplicated it in 1934; but his efforts did not avail in face of the bowling of Buckland and the batting of his old Eton enemy, Lord George Scott, whose "double" of 100 and 66 was the best yet known in the match.

But here Oxford's success ended for a time with the advent of S. M. J. Woods. In the four years in which he played for Cambridge his bowling dominated the match; against him Oxford never reached 200 in any innings, and only one Oxonian reached 50. At this time his pace, break-back, and inexhaustible stamina made him incomparably the best amateur bowler in England. In Francis Ford and Streatfeild, and later Jackson and C. M. Wells, he had more than adequate support in attack, while all four years behind the stumps stood Gregor MacGregor, whose keeping to the fast bowlers annually constituted a three days' wonder. It is a curious coincidence that Steel, the only man who took more wickets in four 'Varsity matches than Woods—38 to 36—had, like him, the finest amateur wicket-keepers of the age to help him.

Cambridge cricket has probably never been stronger than in these years, and the 1890 Eleven is often ranked on a level with Edward Lyttelton's famous side of 1878.

### III. THE GENTLEMEN.

The brilliant recruits from the University Elevens, and especially from the Cambridge sides of the late seventies and early eighties,

succeeded in extending for a few more years the extraordinary ascendancy enjoyed by amateur over professional cricket since 1865. The bowling of Steel and C. T. Studd, the classic batting of A. P. Lucas, who was at his very best in these representative games, with the considerable, if now less brilliant, all-round cricket of the Champion, served to maintain until 1885 the Gentlemen's unbeaten record at Lord's, though the Players were more successful elsewhere, and got home by a single run at Brighton in the desperately contested match of 1881, whilst the Oval match of 1883 actually resulted in a tie.

But two years later the tide at last turned. Steel's bowling was a spent force. C. T. Studd had taken up missionary work in China, and the amateurs' bowling was now really weak. Coincident with this decline, a new generation of great professionals were reaching their best. Barnes, whose bowling figures in these matches from 1879 to 1892 can really challenge comparison with anybody's, was in wonderful form in the late eighties, taking 10 wickets for 58 in the 1887 match, and playing an innings of 130 two years later, when the bowling of Lohmann and Briggs proved altogether too much for the Gentlemen. Curiously enough, in the intermediate year the latter won—for the last time at Lord's until 1894—with a side of which more than half were new to the match. This was an exciting game of low scoring on a difficult wicket. The Players only needed to make 78 in the last innings, obtained all but 7 of them for 6 wickets, and saw their last four batsmen bowled out for a single run by Sam Woods and "round-the-corner" Smith—subsequently the well-known actor. This was "Sam's" freshman's year at Cambridge, and this match "the first time I ever played with the swells." Ten wickets for 76 was not a bad debut! No reference to these matches in the eighties can omit to mention W. G.'s astonishing performance against the Players in the Scarborough game of 1885. The wicket was very difficult after rain, the Players were extremely strong in attack, O'Brien made 21, no one else on the amateurs' side reached 15, and Grace made 174!

The gradual swing of the pendulum in favour of the professionals in this decade is well illustrated by the yearly average tables. In the four first seasons the amateurs occupied something like 75 per cent. of the first twenty or so places in the batting averages, and in the last of those years the South was still unable to provide a single professional batsman in the first twenty-four. In bowling the amateurs were naturally outnumbered, but if the quantity was deficient, the quality was good. A year or two later and the Players are on terms, or better, with the amateurs in batting, whilst the bowling averages show never more than two or three amateur names in the first twenty or so, and those, for the most part, at the bottom of the roll.

We have seen already something of the decline of fast bowling. Until the arrival of Woods, C. E. Horner and Christopherson had been the solitary examples of amateur fast bowling in the eighties, and the careers of both had been very short. Among the professionals, Harrison's had been even shorter, and Crossland was the solitary express bowler of real class between Fred Morley and Tom Richardson. It was the golden age of medium and slow bowling, and, incidentally, of the off-theory. W. G. has told us that the originator of that new development was the Gloucestershire amateur, R. F. Miles. A slow left-hand bowler of no particular merit, his captain had noticed that he occasionally got wickets from what were then thought to be bad balls, very wide to the off. The county bowling was very weak, but its fielding, especially on the off, very good, and, faced one day with the prospect of a long outing on the beautiful Oval wicket, Miles was deputed to toss up a series of really wide off half-volleys. He did so with success, and from this beginning the practice gradually extended itself to the right-hand bowlers, and eventually became virtually the normal method of attack by most bowlers on good wickets, Attewell becoming its greatest exponent. Like every other evolution in bowling, it reacted upon the sister science. In the first place it slowed down appreciably the rate of scoring, and in time the pace of some of the Northern batsmen became funereal, with the serious result that interest in the game began to flag on their home grounds and the attendance sensibly to fall away. Conversely the crowding of all the fieldsmen on to the off-side suggested to one or two enterprising amateurs that this might be turned to their advantage, and the pull-stroke, originally the child of E. M.'s peculiar genius, was resuscitated to the scandal of the critics, but with profit to themselves, by Walter Read, H. V. Page, and Sir Timothy O'Brien.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### COUNTY CRICKET IN THE NINETIES

WITH the advent of the nineties we reach the most far-reaching and practically the final stage in the development of county cricket. The County Cricket Council, a self-constituted body, which originated in 1887 with a view to legislating on such questions as county qualification and classification, brought forward at the end of the season of 1890 an elaborate scheme for the division of all county elevens into three classes, with automatic arrangements for promotion and relegation. Strong opposition was, however, forthcoming from the second-class counties, whose cause was ably championed by Doctor, now Sir, Russell Bencraft, and with agreement impossible, the Council dissolved its own existence, to be resurrected thirteen years later in the Advisory Committee which meets under the ægis of the M.C.C. But "class-consciousness" was now fully awake, and the days of the old "octarchy" were numbered. Somerset had had a brilliant season in 1890, and their claims could not be gainsaid. Their startling success in the next year, when they finished third in the competition, paved the way for the bigger move which took place in 1895, when Derbyshire, Warwickshire, Essex, Hampshire, and Leicestershire were admitted into the first-class Championship, and fared so successfully that the weakest of them finished up ahead of both Notts and Kent! The new counties introduced in this season a number of men who were to make considerable names for themselves: each of them possessed quite an excellent pair of bowlers, all professionals, except the Essex discovery, C. J. Kortright, by fairly common consent the fastest of all bowlers within living memory. Walter Mead of the same county, and Pougher of Leicestershire, were two exceptionally good medium-pace bowlers, of whom the former played for England, and the latter was the hero of a very sensational feat when, for M.C.C. in 1896, he and J. T. Hearne bowled out the Australians for 18 at Lord's. In batting the new counties looked mainly to amateurs: S. H. Evershed and L. G. Wright of Derby, C. McGahey and P. Perrin and F. L. Fane of Essex, A. J. L. Hill and Captain E. G. Wynyard of Hants, C. E. de Trafford of Leicester, H. W. Bainbridge and A. C. S. Glover of Warwick. All these men

either owed to their counties their introduction to first-class cricket at this time, or were by this means able to extend it beyond their 'Varsity careers. It is true that none of the six promotees were to win the Championship until Warwickshire did so in 1911, but they did much to extend the popular enthusiasm for the game, and on occasion played a decisive part in determining the issue of the competition among their more formidable rivals.

## I. SURREY.

### *Richardson and Lockwood.*

As we have seen, the opening of the decade saw Surrey cricket at its very best ; indeed, only once in the first six years did they fail to win the Championship. Their batting does not, on the evidence of figures, seem to have been particularly formidable, though Abel, apart from the season of 1893, when he had trouble with his eyes, was very consistent ; and the two Reads, K. J. Key, and Lohmann were always dangerous. It was their bowling that carried them through. Just when Beaumont and Bowley were falling away, Sharpe appeared, and for two seasons, '90 and '91, was, on fast wickets, as effective a bowler as there was in England, and then when he lost his form as suddenly as he had found it, and Lohmann's health broke down, there came Lockwood and Richardson, the greatest pair of fast bowlers that ever figured in the same county side. It must have been a bitter business for the men of Notts to watch the success of Bowley, Sharpe, and Lockwood, all of them Nottingham born, but allowed by the home authorities to drift South in search of the regular employment that they could not find at Trent Bridge.

In the winter of 1892 Lohmann's health broke down, and he was forced to spend the next two years in South Africa ; he did indeed return, and bowled with a good deal of success in '95 and '96, but he was never fit, and passed out of English cricket at the end of that year, to die six years later and be buried in South Africa.

The two great bowlers upon whom George Lohmann's mantle was destined to fall presented a curious contrast within their superficial similarity. Richardson stood for a supreme natural efficiency, Lockwood for a genius which, if in its very nature less consistent, reached at times a pitch almost demoniac. The former had great natural resources : splendid physique, a lion's heart, a high, rhythmical, and majestic action, a genuine love for bowling, sheer pace and an off-break that was produced by body turn and a cross sweep of his arm—such was his armoury, but never did he use his pace to intimidate, and often and often he would handicap himself

by moderating his speed or bowling on the off-side when the wicket was dangerous or when he had inadvertently hit a batsman. No day was too long for him, no sun too hot, no cause too desperate. Once again I must commend Mr. Neville Cardus for an inimitable pen-picture of this great bowler on the day of his most heroic achievement. It was the last day of the Manchester Test Match of 1896, and the Australians wanted but 125 runs for victory. Richardson had already bowled 68 overs in the opening innings ; there was nothing the matter with the wicket, and people talked gloomily of a 7 or 8 wicket defeat. The defeat came, but only by a margin of 3 wickets, and after three hours of immortal struggle, and for all that time Richardson bowled unrelieved and, so far as success went, practically unsupported. From start to finish of the game he must have bowled the best part of eight hours ; he took all but 4 of the 17 wickets that fell, and it was all in vain.

Richardson twice visited Australia, and bowled there with great success and an energy and courage which the heat could not daunt, but from the second trip in '97-'98 dates the beginning of his decline. His greatest years were 1894 to 1897, and in those four he captured 1,005 wickets for 14 runs apiece, an average of 251 wickets a season, and a record unequalled by any English bowler since the first-class averages were regularly kept. There have been faster bowlers, though they could be counted on the fingers of one hand ; there have been deadlier bowlers, though on a hard wicket very, very few ; but for sustained excellence, day in day out, Richardson need fear comparison with none of his own order ; physically and spiritually he was cast in the mould of Alfred Mynn.

Lockwood was a bowler of a different type ; he had not quite Richardson's gift of physique, or stamina, or temperament ; he had something of the artist's inconsistency, but he was master of his craft, and on his days of inspiration he could rise to a height that was perhaps just beyond the compass of his colleague. He was a fascinating bowler to watch, with his long, bounding run, his elastic action, his great break-back, his control and disguise of the slower ball, and, above all, his ability to make the ball "bounce." At his best there was an indefinable something of vitality and devilry about him that made the ball nip from the pitch wonderfully fast and uncomfortably high. Both Murdoch and Ranjitsinhji labelled him the most deadly fast bowler of their experience, and I remember C. B. Fry telling me that when well set on a good wicket he would face Richardson with confidence, but never felt the same about Lockwood. "I never knew," he said, "when the beggar wasn't going to bowl me out neck and crop, however well I was playing."

Lockwood really established himself in the Surrey side by a sen-

sational bowling performance against Kent in 1891, when he clean bowled 7 wickets for 19 runs in the last innings of the match ; from then until the end of the season of 1894 he was splendidly successful, but the Australian tour that winter brought him nothing but failure, and after bowling far below his form for two more years he dropped right out of the Surrey Eleven in 1897, and it was thought that the last had been seen of him. Never was prophecy more thoroughly disproved. He returned in 1898 and bowled as well as ever, had a large hand in his county's recovery of the Championship in the next year, bowled for England in four out of the five Test Matches in 1902, and only finally retired at the end of 1904.

Apart from his bowling, Lockwood was a fine, forcing batsman, and with Bill Brockwell and Tom Hayward, Surrey were well off for all-round cricketers. In batting they were an attractive side, and liked fast wickets, but on difficult pitches they were somewhat unreliable, for Abel was perhaps the one really sound bat on the side until Hayward forgot about his bowling and became one of the greatest run-getters in the world.

## II. NOTTS AND LANCASHIRE.

The long ascendancy of Nottinghamshire in the " middle ages " had invested that county with a glamour which the darker days that followed could not altogether dull, and their August Bank Holiday meetings with Surrey always filled the Oval to overflowing. Over 60,000 passed the turnstiles on the first two days of the 1892 match, when, for the second time in the season, they defeated their great rivals, and thereby seemed to have made sure of the Championship, only to have the cup dashed from their lips at Taunton. The next few years, however, saw the county sink farther and farther down in the table. It was partly that neither William Gunn nor Shrewsbury were in good health, but chiefly that Attewell, who year after year bowled as many maidens and got as many wickets as most, found himself without any adequate support. Things went from bad to worse, until in 1895 Notts were actually next to bottom in the Championship ; but behind their darkest hour the dawn was not very far to seek. 1897 saw the first appearance of John Gunn and Tom Wass, who ten years later were to play so large a part in their county's triumphant return to supremacy. Moreover, John Dixon, who had succeeded Sherwin in 1888 as the first regular amateur captain of the county, was in splendid form, playing an innings of 268 not out against Sussex, and doing good work for the Gentlemen at Lord's ; whilst his own successor, A. O. Jones, was just beginning to profit by his experience, and was fast becoming one of the most effective amateur batsmen in the country. The debt which the county owes to these two great cricketers can hardly

be exaggerated. When they first appeared there was a distinct danger of the game losing its local popularity, thanks to the side becoming, both in outlook and method, over-professionalized ; from this it was saved by the practice and precept of its two captains.

It was not, however, Nottinghamshire, but Lancashire that most often threatened Surrey's supremacy in the nineties. Five times between 1890 and 1896 they were runners-up to the champions, and when in the next year they went one better, it was no more than they had well deserved. The Red Rose had a strong and well-balanced side. In bowling, Watson, the last of the old brigade, had now been reinforced by Briggs and Mold, and when in 1895 he dropped out, most adequately replaced by William Cuttell. The latter supplied the steadiness, Briggs the tricks, and Mold the fireworks, and no county had so formidable a trio until Yorkshire produced Rhodes, Hirst, and Haigh.

With the exception of A. G. Steel, Johnny Briggs is the greatest all-rounder that Old Trafford has produced. For years no England Eleven was complete without him, and he paid six consecutive visits to Australia. Originally a most resourceful and aggressive batsman, he became more and more impetuous and the slave of his cover-slash ; but as his batting declined his bowling advanced. He was left hand, on the slow side of medium, and was chock full of tricks both of flight and spin ; but perhaps he will most of all be remembered by those who saw him for the rapidity with which he would get through an over. He was a magnificent field to his own bowling, as well as at cover, where he succeeded that prince of covers, Vernon Royle, and he fielded himself a very large proportion of the balls played back off his bowling in front of the wicket. In a moment he was back again and starting his short run, or rather the two skips and a bound which was all that there was of it. Year after year he was somewhere near the top of the English bowling averages, and not for eleven years did he fail to take 100 or more wickets. He was a great character, immensely popular wherever he went, with his round and resilient little figure, his quips and pranks, and his generous heart. With John Briggs on the field the game was always alive and always human. We could do with some more of his type to-day.

Arthur Mold, Briggs's partner in innumerable bowling feats, was in more ways than one Crossland's successor. It is now generally agreed that he was very lucky to have been allowed to bowl unchallenged for eleven years, and eventually the county captains whole-heartedly endorsed Jim Phillips's verdict in no-balling him. But fair or unfair, Mold was for years an extremely formidable proposition. No one has ever sent the ball down so fast with so



little effort, his break-back was devastating, and on wickets that gave him any help—and in those days Old Trafford was distinctly lively—he made the ball get up to a really intimidating height. In 1893 he was preferred to Tom Richardson in the Test Matches, and in both of the next two seasons he took over 200 wickets. On fourteen occasions he took more than 13 wickets in a match, and six times did he and Briggs bowl unchanged throughout both innings.

The Lancashire bowling then, if limited in quantity, was of exceptional quality. In batting they were not so formidable, but they had a number of good players whose different styles blended well. George Baker, who, after his retirement, did such splendid work as a coach at Harrow School, and Albert Ward, were two eminently sound batsmen, Frank Sugg was a dashing hitter, and in Tyldesley and Archie MacLaren they had two recruits destined to become stars of the very first magnitude, and to fill the places of Steel, Hornby, and Barlow, who had now dropped out of regular cricket.

John Tyldesley's life record appeared in *Wisden* for 1922, and its massive figures must have come as something of a surprise even to those who had followed his career pretty closely and knew that for ten years his place in a representative side was practically a foregone conclusion. He scored eighty-six centuries in first-class cricket, and for twenty-two consecutive seasons—with the exception of the four war years—he exceeded 1,000 runs; in five of them 2,000. In style he was the very antithesis of the average modern professional; though he could defend as well as the best, his whole tendency was towards attack, and his method was as effective as it was gallant and fascinating to watch. A brilliant off-driver and cutter, he was very quick on his feet, and was a terror to slow bowlers, especially those of the leg-break variety, whom he would reduce to despairing impotence by running away and hitting them with the break to the off. But it was on sticky wickets that he was seen at his very best, and in these conditions he has possibly never had a superior. In the second Test Match of the Australian tour of 1903–1904 he played an innings at Melbourne which is justly historic. The wicket was impossible, the length ball was coming at any height from the ankle to the neck, and against him were Trumble, Howell, Hopkins, and Saunders. England—and a very great batting side they were—made 95 runs off the bat, of which Tyldesley made 62; of the rest, Albert Relf alone made double figures. Apart from his batting, Tyldesley was a wonderful out-field, and in virtue of his quiet but determined character one of the most respected personalities among the cricketers of his generation.

Last of the Lancashire stalwarts comes A. C. MacLaren. He had made, as we have seen, a brilliant start for the county in the year (1890) when he captained Harrow, but though from that moment there was never any doubt about his class, he did not positively "arrive" until the season of 1894, when he took over the captaincy of the side from Hornby's successor. So finely did he bat towards the end of the season that he was invited to go to Australia with the first of Stoddart's touring elevens that winter. There he was an immediate and conclusive success, playing an innings of 228 in the third match of the tour, and coming out at the end only second to his captain in the batting averages. In the following season, as everybody knows, he astonished the world by playing an innings of 424 against Somerset at Taunton, and that after being out of first-class cricket for more than a month, and finished up the season brilliantly with a century in each of the last three matches, and on wickets that varied from muddy to fiery. From that summer he was recognized as one of the greatest players in England, and was one of the first choices for almost every Test Match until 1909. In the second of Stoddart's Australian tours he was hailed as the greatest batsman we had yet sent to the Antipodes, and in successive innings at Sydney scored 142 and 100, 109 and not out 50, 61 and 140, and 65. Four years later he returned as captain of another side, and once more Sydney supplied him with an extraordinary series of triumphs—145 and 73, 116, 167, and 92 in consecutive appearances. To such a "ground-record" I know of only one parallel, and that, curiously enough, is John Tyldesley's at Edgbaston, where he scored no fewer than eleven centuries during his career. In England MacLaren was never quite so successful against the Australians as he was on tour, but he played some historic innings, notably his 88 not out on a crumbled wicket, and without first-class practice of any kind, in the Lord's Test Match of 1899, and his 140 at Nottingham in 1905.

There have been very few finer batsmen to watch. Every stroke was played in the "grand manner" with a full back-lift, perfect fluency, and a free follow-through. There was no suggestion of the "two-shouldered stance," and yet he was superb on the on-side, especially in forcing the length ball away square of mid-on. In playing back he stood up to his full height, and met the ball with a clean, sweeping stroke, true as a pendulum, and strong enough, as often as not, to force it past the in-fields on either side of the wicket. The action pictures in Fry and Beldam's book, *Great Batsmen*, splendidly illustrate his methods. In fundamentals he was essentially of the classical school, and a perfect model for the young batsman; but there was about all his play a certain spaciousness and majesty that stamped him as no mere master of technique, but as one of the very few who, from time to time, have lifted batting

from the level of an accomplishment into the rarer atmosphere of an art.

### III. KENT AND MIDDLESEX.

In these days Kent and Middlesex were, to an even greater extent than now, amateur sides, and experienced alike the advantages and disabilities that attend such a condition. Throughout this period the metropolitan county could at times put into the field nearly as strong and certainly as attractive an array of batsmen as any of their rivals, but they suffered from a lack of bowling, which, but for one outstanding figure, would have been truly lamentable. At the outset of the decade E. A. Nepean's slow leg-breaks were of great service, and five years later a similar type of bowler in C. M. Wells appeared, and for years did excellent service both with bat and ball, when August set him free from his onerous duties as coach to the Eton Eleven. Jim Phillips, too, who later earned distinction as one of the best and most fearless of umpires, was a useful change bowler; but until the advent of Albert Trott, towards the close of the century, the Middlesex bowling, to all intents and purposes, meant Hearne and Rawlin. The latter was a fastish bowler and one of the earliest right-handers to exploit the swerve consistently: he had days of great success, notably against his native county, Yorkshire, and in 1895 against Notts, when he took 7 wickets for 18 runs, and throughout his long career of twenty seasons for Middlesex he was a splendid trier. But he was at best a very modest second fiddle to his great partner.

Very few bowlers have had a longer uninterrupted career in first-class cricket than J. T. Hearne, and only he, Wilfred Rhodes and Freeman have accounted for more than 3,000 wickets—and it is not too much to say that for years he carried the Middlesex side upon his shoulders. A more beautifully easy action has never been seen: a leisurely gallop, a rhythmical, open-shouldered swing, a perfect length, a quick nip from the off, or—perhaps more deadly still—the ball that “ran away” with his arm when everything to the batsman's watchful eye seemed to bespeak the break-back. He did nothing remarkable until 1891, but that year jumped straight into fame as a medium-paced bowler, second only to Lohmann and Attewell, and from that time he never looked back until the end of the century, when he had a temporary setback, only to recover again. After twenty years' work, as hard as has fallen to any bowler, he seemed in 1909 to be a spent force, but astonished the cricket world by a wonderful recovery in the wet season of 1910, when, bowling almost as he did in his best days, he actually headed the English bowling averages.

His greatest year was 1896, when he took 257 wickets; the

Australian side of that season was very strong, but Hearne had some extraordinary analyses against them :—

For M.C.C. and Ground : 4 for 4 (Australia out for 18) and 9 for 73.

For England : 6 for 41 and 4 for 19.

For South of England : 6 for 8.

Three years later he joined the very select band of those who have brought off the hat-trick in Test Matches, with the bag of Hill, Gregory, and Noble at Leeds, in 1899.

In batting Middlesex had really a galaxy of amateur talent. Their captain, A. J. Webbe, was now past his best, but Stoddart and O'Brien were two of the most brilliant batsmen in England ; and in the offing were such recruits as Francis Ford, J. and R. N. Douglas, R. S. Lucas, C. M. Wells, and last, but by no means least, P. F. Warner. Stoddart, one of the few men to represent his country both at cricket and Rugby football, and the England captain in perhaps the most sensational set of Test Matches ever played, in the tour of 1894–1895, was a batsman of brilliant individuality and power, and there has possibly never been a finer driver of fast bowling, especially if the pitch was fiery. O'Brien was an even more dashing player, but it was on sticky wickets that he was seen at his best, when his extraordinary resource and splendid physique made him at times a terror to the best of bowlers. Of a different style, but of almost equal power, was F. G. J. Ford : tall and thin and seemingly rather fragile, this beautiful player was the Woolley of his generation ; about all his batting there was an almost lackadaisical ease, but so long and true was the swing, so perfect the timing, so free and full the follow through, that the ball would fly from his bat like a Dunlop from Mr. Wethered's iron. In 1897 he was in magnificent form, and had the Australians then been over here he must have been one of the first choices for England. As it was, he had to content himself with quite a successful Australian tour under Stoddart in 1894 and 1895.

And yet, with all her fine players, Middlesex was never quite the power in the land that they suggested ; her amateur batsmen were of the brilliant rather than the consistent school, and there was not enough strength or consistency about the middle of the side. Hearne, great bowler though he was, could not do everything, and though in MacGregor they had the greatest of all English amateur wicket-keepers, the fielding as a whole was often unreliable. Thus it was that, though three times third in the table, and actual runners-up in the last two years of the century, the county never quite wrested the supremacy from the more professional trio, Surrey, Lancashire, and Yorks.

The fortunes of Kent underwent strange vicissitudes. In 1890 they were third in the table ; two years later they had fallen sadly

away ; yet in 1893 they finished second, only to find themselves at the very bottom in 1895.

In the opening years a weakness in batting was their undoing, whilst towards the close of the decade the batting had recovered, thanks to the appearance of a number of good young amateurs, but the bowling had by this time fallen away.

Wright, " Nutty " Martin, and the two Hearnès (Alec and Walter) were for a year or two a formidable quartet of bowlers, but the first-named was nearing the end of his career, and Walter Hearne broke down completely just when a considerable future seemed assured for him. In batting, W. H. Patterson, when he could find time to play, was still a model of correct defence, and on difficult wickets as good a player as most in England ; but Lord Harris had departed to govern Bombay, and of the regular batsmen Alec Hearne was by far the most reliable.

There were plenty of amateur batsmen, but for the most part they were only intermittently available : W. Rashleigh and H. C. Stewart, F. Marchant, and " Gerry " Weigall all did good service, but undoubtedly the greatest event in Kent cricket of the period was the appearance of J. R. Mason, in 1893, fresh from his triumphs for the Winchester Eleven. Mason left from the start no room for doubt as to his batting class, and though his development as a bowler was much slower, it was steady. In 1896 he was clearly one of the great all-rounders of the season, and it is arguable that no better cricketer has ever missed the honour of playing in a Test Match in England. As a batsman he belonged to the upstanding, classical school, and dearly loved a half-volley on the off-side ; as a bowler he was fastish medium in pace, and something after the style of Jack Hearne. No more popular cricketer has played for Kent since the days of Alfred Mynn.

Rather later than Mason came two other very good batsmen, both hailing from Malvern and Cambridge, in S. H. Day and C. J. Burnup, and a really fast bowler in W. M. Bradley, who in 1899 had a wonderful season, and was clearly picked on his merits for two of the Test Matches.

Unfortunately, by this time the former professional bowlers had seen their best days, and it was reserved for Bradley's successor, Arthur Fielder, with that greatest of Kent bowlers, Colin Blythe, to restore Kent to the paths of glory, and to the Championship in 1906.

#### IV. SOMERSET AND GLOUCESTER.

Welcomed into the competition in 1891, the Somerset Eleven startled the cricket world in their very first season by defeating the all-conquering Surrey Eleven at Taunton on the stroke of time, and amid scenes of enthusiasm which are even now remembered in

the West, while in the next year their overwhelming victory over Notts provided a fatal check to the latter when they seemed to be in full running for the leading place. Few more attractive county sides have ever taken the field than were Somerset in the nineties. First and foremost there were H. T. Hewett, their captain, and Lionel Palairet, a truly glorious pair of opening batsmen—"Pure grace at one end, sheer force at the other, a century or two on the board, and nothing underneath it," or, to be more precise, 346, the score with which, against Yorkshire in 1892, they broke the first-wicket record partnership of W. G. Grace and B. B. Cooper, which had held the field since 1869. Hewett was a left-hand hitter of a singularly determined and venomous type. When in form all bowlers and all wickets were alike to him, and like most left-handers he hit the ball in unexpected and demoralizing directions.

Of Lionel Palairet I confess that I cannot write with any pretence to judicial impartiality. As a boy I spent several Augusts not far from Taunton, and never, if I could help it, missed a county match ; and of all the great batsmen that I have been privileged to watch and admire, none has ever given me quite the sense of confident and ecstatic elation as did Palairet in those days. Whenever I came on the ground he made 50, often 100 ; once I followed him to the Oval, and was rewarded with an innings of 112 against Lockwood and Richardson at their best, for which even the sternest critics were beggared for epithets. A perfect stance, an absolutely orthodox method, power in driving that few have equalled, and withal a classic grace and poise, unruffled even in adversity. Even now I can recapture something of a thrill when I recall that gorgeous off-drive, with a flight like a good cleek-shot, swimming over the low white railing of the Taunton ground. From the day on which I first saw it, his Harlequin cap took on the colour of all earthly ambition !

To support these two great batsmen there were other dashing players—Vernon Hill, Frank Phillips, the younger Palairet, and, of course, Sam Woods. But for a year or two after the county's promotion the latter was a greater power as a bowler, and with another fast bowler in Captain Hedley and the two professionals, Tyler and Nichols, made up quite a strong attack. Tyler was left-handed and one of the slowest bowlers imaginable. Naturally he was sometimes expensive, but on the whole he was for years wonderfully successful, and he had his days of real triumph. In 1892 he took 15 wickets for 96 runs in the match that robbed Notts of the Championship, and three years later he took all 10 Surrey wickets in their first innings for 49 runs. From the moment they appeared in the competition, Somerset won popularity as a sporting and attractive side.

The contemporary fortunes of Gloucestershire will always be memorable on three accounts ; the appearance of Charles Townsend, the greatest boy bowler since A. G. Steel, the gradual development of Gilbert Jessop into the most sensational hitter that the world has known, and the marvellous " Indian summer " of the Champion in 1895.

Townsend had first appeared for the county in the August of 1893, a year before he left Clifton, and though of almost fragile physique, had impressed everyone with his leg-breaks, bowled, for the most part, over the wicket. In 1895 he jumped from promise into most brilliant performances : he played one match in May without doing anything to speak of with the ball, but coming back into the side at the end of July he carried everything before him, taking 122 wickets in eleven matches. Admittedly the grounds favoured him, but there was no getting away from bags of 16 wickets against Notts, 15 against Yorks, and 12 each against Sussex, Surrey, and Somerset. Unlike most of the bowlers of his type, he did not set most of his field on the on-side, but attacked the middle and off-stump, and his slips revelled in the chances that came their way. Like Armstrong, he was tall enough to give the ball flight without making it easy for the batsman to make ground to him, and like Armstrong, too, he could bowl the ball that went straight on. On his form at this time he was probably as great a slow bowler as has ever appeared, and his deadliness was all the greater because he appeared at a time when leg-breaks were an art almost unknown. Subsequently his bowling never again quite reached this level, but his improvement as a batsman was most rapid. In 1898 he made over 1,000 runs and took 145 wickets, his only rival as an all-round player being Stanley Jackson ; whilst in the next year, with an aggregate of 2,440 runs, he established himself as beyond question the best of all English left-handed batsmen. At the wicket he resembled Francis Ford, perhaps on rather more sedate lines, but there was wonderful power in his long, flail-like swing which sent the ball racing through the off-side fields.

Of Jessop we shall speak in another place, for though by the end of the century he had already done famous work for his county, it was rather as a Cambridge cricketer that he had won his choicest laurels.

And what is to be said of W. G.'s performance in the May of his forty-seventh year ? As far back as 1882 the critics had written of him as though he was beginning to pay toll to the claims of *anno Domini*, and though he had promptly given them the lie, the opening of the nineties saw him apparently far past his best and dropping almost into the middle background. Admittedly, the wickets in the May of 1895 were very good, but to score a thousand runs in the month was a truly prodigious feat. He had, as was his habit,

begun practice in March, and was in good form before the season began. His opening innings was the ominous 13, but he followed it up with 103; that was for the M.C.C. against Sussex in the match that witnessed the Jam Sahib's sensational debut for his county. Then followed two modest scores against Yorkshire, and then the Champion took the bit between his teeth with a vengeance. Against Somerset he scored 288—this was his hundredth century in first-class cricket, and was suitably celebrated with a "magnum" drunk on the field! After a modest half-century against Cambridge, he travelled down to Gravesend, fielded out while Kent made 470, went in first himself, and was last out for 257; saw Kent rattled out by Painter and Roberts for 76, and then made 73 out of the 104 runs needed for victory in just one hour of the hour and a quarter left for play. Think of it! On the field for every ball bowled, 330 runs for once out, and a man of close on forty-seven!

May 30th arrived, and W. G. won the toss against Middlesex at Lord's. He needed 153 runs to complete his 1,000, and when, with his score at 149, a long hop on the leg-side was faithfully dealt with, the crowd rose at him, and his Middlesex opponents, one and all, clustered round the grand old man with congratulations as hearty as if he had been one of themselves. In honour of his extraordinary achievement three separate testimonial funds were opened, by the M.C.C., by Gloucester, and by the *Daily Telegraph*, and a sum of close on £10,000 eventually found its way to his bankers.

#### V. LORD HAWKE AND THE YORKSHIRE REVIVAL.

We left Yorkshire at the end of the eighties in something like the doldrums, and though the first year of the next decade saw them as high as third in the Championship, they owed their place very largely to the good work of Ulyett and Louis Hall, both of them approaching the veteran stage. In the next two years the county fell right away, and the outlook seemed gloomy indeed. Not only had they been able to discover no new players to replace the old, but the whole atmosphere in which their cricket was played was one of pessimism, distrust, and abuse. Hard things were said about the policy and composition of the committee, which its detractors stigmatized as a close borough for Sheffield; and even the Yorkshire crowds, normally such whole-hearted enthusiasts for their own men, allowed their continued disappointments to get the better of them, and greeted the players' failures with open derision.

But in that, the darkest hour for Yorkshire cricket, the sun, could the critics have seen it, was close behind the clouds, and in the very next season, 1893, lighted the White Rose on a brilliant passage to the Championship. That victory, from which they have



never since really looked back, was popular in many ways. The cricket world, as a whole, felt that it was high time Surrey were deprived of the leadership; the North, in particular, rejoiced that at last the South had had to admit defeat, and it was generally recognized that Yorkshire owed their success to their fine team work, and in particular to their splendid fielding. For some years past it had been the fashion to say that the Yorkshiremen were "too polite to run you out," but now a strong infusion of young blood and the growing influence of Lord Hawke's sturdy enthusiasm as captain began to tell a very different tale.

This season saw virtually the "arrival" of Brown, Tunncliffe, and Hirst, while of amateurs, A. Sellars, throughout the year, and Stanley Jackson, in August, did splendid service. Of the old hands, Peel and Wainwright were in great form, but it was the new men that really made the difference to the side.

No account of the year of Yorkshire's recovery would be complete without reference to the amazing game played against Lancashire at Old Trafford before a Bank Holiday crowd of 25,000, which broke all records for the ground. Of the four innings played, the highest was 64. With 57 to win in the last innings of the match, Jackson and Sellars rattled up 24 in a quarter of an hour, and the game seemed over; but then Jackson was run out through an unfortunate misunderstanding; Ernest Smith, who looked like hitting off the runs, was out to a catch at cover which no Yorkshireman believes was caught; and the last 6 wickets fell for 11 runs. At the crisis, with only 6 runs wanted, Johnny Briggs had the courage to toss up a very slow, short half-volley to, of all people, Ulyett, and Albert Ward in the country made no mistake.

Twice again before the end of this century, and for the three opening years of the next, were Yorkshire champions, and there can be no question that throughout this period the general level of their sides was the highest in England. Until the end of the nineties they could not perhaps be called a great eleven, without somewhat overrating their bowling strength. On slow wickets Peel and Wainwright were a very formidable pair, but on true grounds they had no match-winning bowler. George Hirst, when he first appeared, was just a straightforward fast bowler without a swerve, and though he started well his bowling fell away markedly as his batting came on with leaps and bounds. The turning-point came with the arrival of Schofield Haigh and Wilfred Rhodes. The former, at that time a fast-medium bowler with a long run and a fine slow ball, took 8 wickets for 78 in his very first match—against the Australian Eleven in 1896; but it was not until the beginning of the next century that he became the devastating bowler of break-backs that made him for some years as good as any right-hander in England on a sticky wicket. Rhodes, on the other hand, emerged as a star

of the very first magnitude right from the start. His appearance could not have been more opportune, coinciding as it did with the retirement of Peel from the county side. In his very first season, 1898, the young left-hander took 143 wickets for 13 each, and even when allowance is made for the abnormally wet summer, no new bowler, with the possible exception of C. L. Townsend, had so startled English cricket since A. G. Steel at Cambridge twenty years before.

Wainwright alternated between great years with the bat and with the ball, whilst Peel, before the unfortunate incident that in 1897 curtailed his career, had a magnificent season in 1896, batting most brilliantly when the wickets were hard, and then, when the weather broke, coming out in his finest form with the ball.

Two years earlier F. S. Jackson had first become a regular member of the side, and for the next twelve, whenever he could find time to play, his batting and bowling proved an immense asset. Judged by mere figures, his record, good though it is, cannot be called extraordinary, but Jackson, from his Harrow days, never belied his pre-eminent reputation as "the man for the big occasion." No English cricketer, not even Hobbs, has rivalled his performances in home Test Matches with Australia—he was, alas! never able to go overseas—and the great days of the Yorkshire season, their fights with the Red Rose, nearly always found him in his best form. An orthodox batsman, yet master of all the strokes, especially the cut and the on-drive, he was supremely good on slow wickets. A medium-paced bowler, with a beautiful action, he could keep an immaculate length, and make the ball "nip" very quickly from the pitch. But in both capacities his natural talent was raised to a higher power by his supreme confidence, which revelled in a crisis, and hardly suffered him to contemplate the possibility of failure. The influence of such a personality on the field was incalculable; as a great cricketer said to me last winter, "With 'Jacker' in at the other end, one simply couldn't help batting!"

Good though the Yorkshire bowling was, it was for some years the strength of their batting that really carried the side, and of all their batsmen of this period pride of place must be given to J. T. Brown. Short of stature, but very broad and sturdy, Brown, like others of his build, excelled in the "square" strokes, the cut and the hook. His defence was splendid, but he was equally good at forcing the game when required to do so. He will always be remembered for his 140 in the final Test Match in Australia in 1894-5, and for his two great first-wicket stands with Tunnicliffe—378 against Sussex in 1897, and 554 against Derbyshire in the following year. On each occasion Brown himself went on to score 300.

His famous partner, John Tunnicliffe, was one of the tallest men who ever reached the top class. Originally he was by nature

a hitter, but after a year, in which he tended towards the other extreme, he worked out his batting salvation on orthodox lines, though he always kept in reserve, ready for an emergency, the great hitting powers which his extraordinary length of limb assured to him. For years he was a solid rock upon which many a new ball wasted itself in vain, and it is doubtful whether any better professional batsman has ever been denied representative honours. As a slip-field he was very great indeed, combining with his phenomenal reach an agility that, in so big a man, was quite astonishing. "Jack Brown o' Driffield," and "Long John o' Pudsey," these two men did as much as any to lay the foundations of the White Rose triumphs.

In 1895 another splendid batsman was discovered in David Denton, who for the next twenty years was to fill a peculiar and vital niche in the structure of the side, as the man above all others to get runs quickly when they were so needed. A beautiful pair of wrists made his off-side hitting a joy to watch, but he could hook and pull with equal élan on heavy wickets. From the moment he went in Denton was after the ball, and often and often did he alter the whole complexion of a game, either when his side was behind the clock, or when a bowler had got his tail up and threatened to run through the eleven. It is said that, in the matter of dropped catches, he was the luckiest batsman that ever lived; but if it is true, it is at least a case of fortune favouring the brave. Five times in the first dozen years of the twentieth century he totalled over 2,000 runs, and in twenty-one seasons he topped the 1,000, a record only surpassed by W. G. His life aggregate—over 36,000 runs—is among the first dozen recorded, and he scored sixty-one hundreds for Yorkshire alone. Apart from his batting, Denton was a glorious field in the country and at third man, and so sure a catch that, when once at Lord's he actually missed two chances, his brother professionals were almost moved to tears!

Of other batsmen, Wainwright and Hirst both did so well in 1897 as to win places in Stoddart's Australian team that winter, though in each case their batting success was to some extent at the expense of their bowling. Wainwright had a beautiful method, and was particularly partial to the off-ball, whilst George Hirst already manifested his peculiar genius for making runs when they were most wanted.

Of the amateurs, apart from Stanley Jackson, the one regular member was Lord Hawke, to whose leadership, both on and off the field, the county owed so deep a debt. What Shuter had done for Surrey, Hornby for Lancashire, and I. D. Walker for Middlesex, that, and more than that, did he do for the Yorkshiremen. Moreover, he was in fine form with the bat himself, averaging in several years round about 30, and possessing the happy knack of coming

off at a pinch. Finally, just at the close of the century there appeared in the Yorkshire ranks three other amateurs who were to do their county great service, Frank Mitchell, T. L. Taylor, and E. R. Wilson—Cantabs all. Mitchell, a brilliant hitter who soon came to add defence and resource to his natural powers ; Taylor, the last and by no means the least of the great batsmen turned out by H. H. Stephenson from Uppingham ; and Rockley Wilson, a sound and successful batsman, and possibly the best length amateur slow bowler that the game has known, who reserved his greatest success for an age when most cricketers have abandoned such activity for the less arduous pastime of making runs. It is interesting, if not significant, that in 1899 no fewer than eight amateurs appeared at different times in the county side, and of these all but two had captained the Cambridge Eleven. Of that Yorkshire side seven men had played for England, or were destined to do so, and only the exceptional ability of Lilley with the bat as well as the gloves prevented David Hunter from making an eighth. A better catcher never put on gloves.

## CHAPTER XIX

### AMATEUR CRICKET IN THE NINETIES

#### I. THE SCHOOLS.

**A**T first sight the last ten years of the century brought little distinction to Eton cricket ; in fact, judging by the actual results of the great match at Lord's, this was the leanest period she had known since the fifties and early sixties. Between 1887 and 1903 Eton only beat Harrow once.

And yet her elevens during that time include some famous names, and in the majority of years her batting could not be called anything but strong ; but the bowling was weak, and the result—four consecutive draws in the middle nineties—led to a strong and very influential movement for the extension of the game into the third day. This Dr. Warre resisted, mainly on general grounds, and his action has been entirely justified by results. Of the all-round players, two stand out, C. C. Pilkington of Eton and E. M. Dowson of Harrow. Like his younger brother, H. C., Pilkington was a beautiful stylist, especially in the cover-strokes. He was only moderately successful with the bat against Harrow, but scored with wonderful consistency in his four Winchester matches. In bowling he was always steady and dependable, and his last year headed the Eton averages with 39 wickets for 11 apiece.

By winning his colours when only just over fifteen years of age, Dowson entered upon a series of nine appearances at Lord's, five for Harrow and four for Cambridge. The source of his nickname, "Toddles," is not far to seek, for no smaller boy had been seen in the match since A. N. Hornby appeared in 1864. At Elstree he had already won the reputation of being fit to bowl in any cricket, and his performance on this, his first, appearance against Eton of bowling 90 overs for 195 runs and 8 wickets is one of the most extraordinary on record. Left-hand slow medium, he was wonderfully steady, and, at the same time, very clever in his variations of pace. He took in all 35 Eton wickets. His batting also developed very rapidly, and his innings of 64 in 1897 and 87 not out in 1899 bore the hall-mark of real class. As an all-round cricketer he ranks, among Harrovians, with V. E. Walker and F. S. Jackson.

Of the Eton bowlers of the period only F. H. E. Cunliffe seems to deserve special mention. He had a great match in 1894—13 wickets for 94 runs—and subsequently his left-hand medium-paced bowling won him a “blue” as a freshman at Oxford. There were a number of good batsmen, the most successful, apart from the Pilkingtons, being H. B. Chinnery, B. J. T. Bosanquet (who scored 120 in the match of 1896), Francis Grenfell (the V.C.), and Harry Longman (son of George Longman of earlier fame). The two last scored 167 together for the first wicket in the game of 1899. Than Longman, few Etonians have been more consistently successful against both Harrow and Winchester. He won his “blue” as a freshman at Cambridge, and it is safe to say only his abandonment of the ‘Varsity in favour of the Army cut short a great career as a batsman. Apart from Dowson, the Harrow ranks include few names of subsequent distinction, the strength of the sides lying in their general level rather than in individual champions. Stogdon and Cole, however, both made centuries against Eton, and very attractively, too, whilst the last Harrow side of the century included five men, destined to win their “blues.”

For the Wykehamists the ten years under review were among the most successful in their history. Twice they beat Eton two years running, one match was drawn greatly in their favour, and in the last game of the century Eton only got home by one wicket. Head and shoulders above all other Winchester cricketers of the period stand H. D. G. Leveson-Gower and J. R. Mason, and seldom can two men have done more to win a match than they did against Eton in 1892. In that game Mason made 147 and 71 and took 8 wickets, whilst Leveson-Gower made 83 in the second innings and was also responsible for 8 wickets, and those for only 33 runs. Mason was a wonderful boy cricketer, tall and strong and confident, with a classical style of batting and a bowler with something of the length and nip of J. T. Hearne. Stepping straight into the Kent Eleven in the August after leaving school, he found his feet at once, and both in batting and bowling established himself immediately. Leveson-Gower, less commanding in method, had admirable defence and some original strokes. Moreover, he was full of personality, then, as at Oxford, loved a crisis, and was a clever bowler of slow leg-breaks. In R. P. Lewis Winchester had, at the same time, a school stumper who can have had few superiors. “Mason’s match” was in 1892, and in 1896 and 1897 Eton were again defeated. In these years there were no particular stars, but the elevens were well balanced, and E. B. Noel’s batting played a large part in both years in winning the all-important match.

Glancing now at some of the other schools, we may notice that G. O. Smith and G. J. Mordaunt were each three years captain of

their school elevens, Charterhouse and Wellington respectively, and Smith wound up a most successful school career by scoring 229 in his last match against Westminster. Contemporarily with them, Fry and the younger Palairet (R. C. N.) were making a heap of runs for Repton, and "Plum" Warner, though often handicapped by ill-health, convinced the best judges that a batsman of the first order was being incubated at Rugby. But the greatest feature of the school cricket at this time was unquestionably the bowling of C. L. Townsend. Here are his figures for his three years in the Clifton Eleven :—

1892 .. ..	59 wickets for 11·67
1893 .. ..	55 wickets for 12·8
1894 .. ..	85 wickets for 8·49

Of course he was a very good school batsman, too, but it was as a bowler that he was given a place in the Gloucester side when still at school—with what success we have already seen.

Over the whole decade few schools can show a record equal to Uppingham's. In 1892 they went through the season undefeated, and again in 1898 and 1899 they had first-rate sides. In the earlier years Bardswell was a fine bowler, and C. E. M. Wilson a wonderfully sound batsman, whose consistently high scoring foreshadowed his success at Cambridge. As a bowler he was also well above the average. Subsequently there was T. L. Taylor, a first-rate wicket-keeper and a batsman of the very top class, and C. E. Wilson, who could take his 50 wickets in the year and also set up the record of 201 against Repton. Not since the palmy days under H. H. Stephenson in the seventies had Uppingham cricket been seen to such advantage.

After Fry's departure Repton fell sadly away, but Malvern were about this time entering upon that extraordinary vein of brilliant cricketers which does not yet seem wholly exhausted. Following upon P. H. Latham, there were in 1893 H. K. and W. L. Foster to bat, and two very good bowlers in W. W. Lowe and Neville; and then in quick succession came Burnup, R. E. Foster, G. H. Simpson (later Simpson-Hayward, the famous lob-bowler), S. H. Day, and W. H. B. Evans. Of all these, perhaps Sam Day had the biggest school reputation, especially when, with still another school season to come, he made 110 for Kent in his first county game.

Cheltenham had a fine and unbeaten side in 1896, including A. H. Du Boulay, E. I. M. Barrett, and F. H. B. Champain, the latter one of the most attractive of school batsmen, and, at the same time, E. R. Wilson at Rugby was showing that soundness and long-headedness as an all-round player that was to make him one of the most successful of cricketers in the University match. J. W. F. Crawford had wonderful figures with both bat and ball for Merchant Taylors, but I am not sure that the greatest boy player of the whole epoch was not another Crawford—V. F. S. True, the opposition

he encountered at Whitgift was not of the first water, but when he did come up against first-class bowling he dealt with it as summarily as any other. Certainly no finer driver has ever appeared in a school side ; his power was wonderful and his method classically straight. Here are his figures for his last two years :—

In 1896 a batting average of 48 for 721 runs, and a bowling average of 7·16 for 80 wickets.

In 1897 a batting average of 74 for 1,340 runs, and a bowling average of 10·2 for 78 wickets.

The century came to a close with something of a galaxy of talent in batting ; but there is little doubt as to the brightest star—R. H. Spooner. He did well enough in his first two years in his school eleven, but in 1899 finished in a blaze of glory, his last scores for Marlborough being 69 and 198—not a bad “double” for the “Test Match” against Rugby at Lord’s. Moreover, his style equalled his execution, and even at that early stage there were few more graceful batsmen in England. Perhaps there was something a little flamboyant about his methods, but his eye and his wrists rarely let him down. In mid-August he appeared for his county, Lancashire, against Middlesex. He was sent in first in each innings, and scored 44 and 83. It was said that more beautiful off-driving had not been seen at Lord’s that season.

## II. THE UNIVERSITIES.

The cricket of the Universities during the nineties was full of interest ; there were some exceptionally good sides, perhaps a finer array of batsmen than any similar period can show, some desperate matches and sensational incidents, and from year to year the balance shifted from Oxford to Cambridge and back again with a curious and sometimes unexpected regularity. Cambridge were, as we have seen, a wonderful side in 1890, and threatened to be at least as good in the next year ; as a matter of fact, things did not go quite right for them all the season, and at Lord’s they had a bad fright. Thanks to splendid bowling by Sam Woods, they had made Oxford follow on, and only needed 90 to get in the last innings, but to get them they had to struggle desperately hard. Berkeley, bowling out of the pavilion in a bad light, met with startling success with the ball, and only a 41 from C. P. Foley saved the Light Blues from a complete collapse ; even so when the eighth wicket fell they still needed one more. Woods left the pavilion at a run, ran down the pitch at his first ball, reached it somehow, and the next moment it landed first bounce into Block D. It was a typical and fitting finish to his great career as a University cricketer.



In 1892, under the captaincy of Lionel Palairet, Oxford had their revenge. They were not perhaps a great side, but they were eminently cheerful and determined. Palairet himself was in magnificent batting form. Cambridge were, at least on paper, so good that there was no room for A. O. Jones; but they were outplayed in the first half of the match at Lord's, and a really stout recovery could not regain the lost ground. M. R. Jardine, like his son D. R., an eminently sound and rather on-side player, repaired a series of failures at Lord's with 140 and 39. He goes down to history as the only player who has both "bagged a brace" and made a century in the University match. Vernon Hill made a dashing 114, driving the length ball with the utmost cheerfulness and aplomb from the very start; it is said that before he went in to bat he backed himself to get 50, "if not 100"! When the Light Blues followed on everybody made runs, and Streatfeild followed up his great bowling two years before with a fine hundred. Oxford had to get 187 in the last innings, and in getting them their captain, Palairet, very fittingly played the largest part. His 71 not out was a classic, and he finished off the match "with a series of superlative off-drives."

It says much for the uncertainty of cricket form from year to year that with sixteen old Blues still in residence at the two Universities, the verdict of 1892 should have been utterly reversed. Oxford were a bitter disappointment, and failed to win a single one of their fixtures. Their batsmen fell away rather than came on, and their bowling was, with the exception of Berkeley, very weak. Cambridge were a strong side. Jackson, in this his second year of captaincy, was once again in tremendous form, and C. M. Wells had become an absolutely first-rate slow bowler. In a dry summer his leg-spinners (and that dangerous ball that "spun straight on") accounted for 47 wickets for 13 each in Cambridge matches. Ranjitsinhji this year won his "blue." He failed at Lord's, but saw his side overwhelm Oxford, who on a fast ground were routed out for 106 and 64.

Next year Oxford, with a fine batting and fielding side and one good bowler in Gerald Bardswell, soundly beat Cambridge, who had probably as weak a lot of bowlers as ever represented them. C. B. Fry celebrated his captaincy by scoring 100 not out at Lord's. It was rather a laborious innings, but when, with his score at 83, he was joined by R. P. Lewis, about whose batting the best that could be said was that "he backs up well," Fry gave a foretaste of his great driving powers, and collected the necessary 17 in two overs! The Dark Blues started the season of 1895 with great expectations, for their batting seemed stronger than ever, and they fared very well in their trial games; but they arrived at Lord's rather stale, and their bowling, never really strong, was collared in the Cambridge second innings, and in the final fight their batsmen failed





disastrously, all except H. K. Foster, whose innings of 121 out of 190 from the bat must rank as high as anything ever done in the series. At that time his defence had not yet matured, but he had a marvellous pair of wrists, unbounded confidence, and an eye that very rarely failed him. In power and brilliancy he approached his own standard in rackets. Cambridge had an admirable captain and good wicket-keeper and batsman in W. G. Druce, and their bowling, without being formidable, was at its best at Lord's; but the outstanding member of the side was undoubtedly the captain's younger brother, Norman Druce. He had done nothing sensational at Marlborough, but in his second year at Fenner's he blossomed out into one of the most attractive and commanding batsmen in England. After leaving Cambridge in 1897 he visited Australia with Stoddart's side, but then he practically dropped out of first-class cricket. The best judges among his contemporaries are unanimous in thinking that in natural ability he is to be ranked in the first division of the first class.

1896 was Oxford's *annus mirabilis*. Their rivals had a fine side, with plenty of batting, both sound and offensive, and a well varied, if not really formidable, attack. They had beaten Yorkshire at Fenner's by an innings, and immediately before the 'Varsity match had gone in to get 507 in their last innings against the M.C.C., and got them for 7 wickets! But the Dark Blues were no ordinary team. Certainly they had only two good bowlers, Foster Cunliffe and Hartley, but their batting was extremely strong, their fielding phenomenal, and in Leveson-Gower they had as good a captain as has ever led either University. At lunch time on the last day the odds seemed very long against them. Put in to get 330, they had lost three of their best wickets, Warner, Mordaunt, and Harry Foster, for 70 runs. But G. O. Smith and C. C. Pilkington then began an invaluable partnership which broke the first onslaught of the Cambridge attack, added 84 runs in something over an hour, and materially altered the aspect of the game. Smith had had to face "schools," and had not played much during term. When he did, he was so out of form that at the beginning of the last match on tour his place was quite uncertain. In this, however, he made no mistake, and scores of 41 and 85 had given him just the match practice and confidence which he needed. Pilkington, on the other hand, had wasted no time in justifying the great reputation which accompanied him from Eton, and 86 and not out 54 in his very first match for Oxford had made his "blue" a certainty.

The real crisis of the game came when with 176 still wanted, Pilkington was finely caught and bowled by Jessop. It was now Leveson-Gower's turn to bat, and everybody felt that the issue might lie with him. I would dearly have liked to quote the whole of the brilliant account of that game written by one of its parti-

icipants, the late Foster Cunliffe, in *Fifty Years of Sport*; but I must content myself with a sentence: "Through an atmosphere of hope tempered with unbelief our captain walked to the wicket. Over and over again had he saved the side; was-it possible that fortune would once again favour the brave?" As a matter of fact, neither batsman owed anything to fortune. Leveson-Gower defended stubbornly, whilst Smith hit with ever-increasing confidence and power. When the captain was caught at the wicket for a wholly admirable 41, the "moral balance" of the game had shifted, but not so far as to make the next wicket anything but vitally momentous. Fortunately Bardswell rose to the occasion. Jessop, whose very fast bowling had throughout provided the "storm truppen," was knocked off for the last time, and with Smith hitting more brilliantly than ever the runs were reeled off. With only 3 wanted, the old Carthusian jumped out to Cobbold to finish off the game, but was caught at slip. His 132 will rank as one of the most famous centuries in the whole series of matches. The winning hit came a moment later, in the shape of a difficult chance from Bardswell to that safest of out-fields, C. J. Burnup.

Of the remaining three matches of the century, Cambridge won the first, Oxford the second, and the last was drawn. In 1897 Oxford had several very promising, but inexperienced, batsmen, but Cambridge were a good all-round side, with five bowlers and plenty of batting. Norman Druce was again in wonderful form at Fenner's, and actually averaged 66 for the University season. Jessop had a good summer, and C. E. M. Wilson was again at his best in the 'Varsity match. In 1898, for the third year in succession, he came off at Lord's, scoring 115 very soundly, whilst his fellow Uppinghamian, T. L. Taylor, made 70 very well indeed. But the Light Blue bowling was weak, and Oxford countered all along the line, Alec Eccles playing beautifully for 109, and R. E. Foster giving a foretaste of what was to come with a stylish 57. Then it rained. Cunliffe, in this his eighth bowl of the match, was at his best, and Oxford won easily by 9 wickets. Finally, at the end of the epoch, two well-matched sides, each decidedly weak in bowling, met on a superlatively good wicket, and the inevitable draw resulted. There was much good batting, but the best, or at any rate the most attractive, innings was the 93 of H. C. Pilkington, who, like his elder brother, got his "blue" as a freshman, and only lacked the opportunity to prove himself amongst the first flight of amateur batsmen.

Two incidents connected with these matches must be recorded, as directly responsible for an important change in the laws. At that time the "follow-on" was compulsory, and it was obvious that this rule might react hardly on the fielding side. Such a situation arose in the matches of 1893 and 1896. In the first C. M.

Wells prevented Oxford from following on by bowling a no-ball and a wide to leg, and the incident provoked no more than a certain amount of pavilion discussion ; but when in 1896 Mitchell, under exactly similar circumstances, directed Shine to bowl away 12 runs to leg, a scene unparalleled at Lord's ensued. He and his eleven, on their return to the pavilion almost immediately afterwards, were greeted with a storm of abuse, in which many of the most experienced cricketers were the first to join. A violent correspondence in *The Times* followed, which found "Cantab divided against Cantab and brother against brother." At this distance of time it is clear that Mitchell's action was wholly unexceptionable ; not he but the rule was wrong, as its subsequent alteration proved.

Looking at the period as a whole, one cannot help being struck by the number of brilliant amateurs that it introduced to the game. Of all-round players there were Jackson, Streatfeild, Wells, C. E. M. Wilson, and Jessop from Cambridge, and Ernest Smith and Bosanquet from Oxford. Of all that distinguished company Wilson can point to the finest record in the 'Varsity match ; the greater the need the more he rose to it. Of bowlers pure and simple, there was no great supply. Woods stands out head and shoulders above the rest, but Cunliffe did yecoman work in his four years, and Berkeley was well above standard. In batting there was an absolute galaxy of talents, a great deal of it, moreover, quite brilliant in method. Apart from those already mentioned as having made history in the match itself, G. J. Mordaunt, who captained Oxford in 1895, was a magnificent off-side player, who made 264 not out for the 'Varsity against Sussex that year ; Frank Mitchell, of Cambridge, though not yet the great batsman that he afterwards became, was a wonderful hitter of the ball ; whilst T. L. Taylor, incidentally a most efficient wicket-keeper, was as good as any of them when the ball was turning. Finally it was something of a golden age in fielding ; the Oxford sides of 1895 and 1896 were wonderful, and Cambridge were little behind them. Jardine, Mordaunt, Burnup, and Vernon Hill were all about as good out-fields as they could be.

### III. THE GENTLEMEN.

It was not to be expected that the Gentlemen would maintain indefinitely their long ascendancy over the Players which began with W. G.'s first appearance in the great match at Lord's in 1865. For some time the professionals had been seriously outmatched in batting, but gradually a new and formidable generation of professional batsmen began to appear, with Shrewsbury and William Gunn at their head, and close at their heels Richardson, Lockwood,

Mold, and J. T. Hearne to reanimate their attack. Nevertheless, the amateurs held their own for the last ten years of the century, winning three of the Lord's matches as against the Players' four, but having something of the best in two out of the three drawn games. The outstanding feature of the three drawn games was the batting of Shrewsbury, who on each occasion stood between his side and sheer disaster. In 1891 he went right through the innings for 81 not out, made in over four hours on a wicket that found everybody else in his eleven very much at sea. Two years later the Players were skittled out in their first innings by C. J. Kortright, but in the follow-on Shrewsbury mastered that new terror as he had mastered all the old, to the tune of 88 in something under three hours. This was Kortright's first and greatest performance in the match; his pace was a positive revelation, and several of the Players made no secret of their discomfort. MacGregor, greatest of all amateur wicket-keepers, was in marvellous form, and did not let a single bye in either innings.

In 1894 the Gentlemen won by an innings, and Woods and Jackson bowled unchanged throughout the game. This extraordinary feat had been three times performed before in the match—by Bathurst and Kempson in 1853, by Willsher and Tarrant in 1864, and by Evans and Steel in 1879; but it has never been repeated since. Jackson took 12 of the wickets for but 77 runs, and as he also made the highest score of the game (63), it was clearly his match. The Gentlemen were a remarkably young side; leaving the Champion out of account, the average age works out at just over twenty-five years!

The Players had their revenge in the following year, but only after an intensely interesting game, and by the narrow margin of 32 runs. The amateurs' bowling, in the absence of Woods, looks decidedly weak on paper, but up to a time they did splendidly. After dismissing the Players for 231, they headed them by 28 runs on the first innings, Grace and Stoddart making their memorable partnership of 151 for the first wicket against Mold and Richardson on a distinctly "lively" wicket. Things continued to go well for them, and half the Players were out in their second venture for 61; but fine batting by Ward, Peel, and Storer pulled the game round, and with Tom Richardson actually scoring 43—his highest score of the year—the Gentlemen were set 336 to win. From the start things went badly, and at half-past five 9 wickets were down for 231. Then Ernest Smith, who ever loved a lost cause, joined Fry, and by most brilliant hitting the two Oxonians actually added 72 runs in thirty-five minutes. Another quarter of an hour at the same fierce rate and victory was theirs; but just as excitement reached fever point Fry jumped out to drive Peel, missed the ball, and was stumped. This match saw three notable and highly successful

debuts, on the part of Fry himself, Norman Druce, then only twenty years of age, and Tom Hayward.

The Gentlemen's Eleven of 1896 is often quoted as the best which they ever put into the field. It has strong rivals, of course ; there was a splendid side in 1878, with two Graces, two Lytteltons. Lucas, Steel, Hornby, Appleby, and Lord Harris, and the modern generation will not lightly surrender the claims of the 1914 team. Possibly F. R. Foster and Douglas were even more formidable on that occasion than were Woods and Jackson in 1894, but there was more change bowling in the earlier eleven, whilst their batting order reads like an all-star cast at a Command Performance. Once again, too, they were young and dashing in the field. For a long time they seemed assured of a very easy victory, for the Players, after collapsing badly for 116, were only 52 runs ahead in the follow-on when their eighth wicket fell. Then Hayward found a great partner in J. T. Hearne, and together they added 156 runs for the ninth wicket ! Neither then nor afterwards was Hearne in the habit of making many runs, but, as a matter of fact, he was always a good batsman who recognized his chief duty to be bowling and did not bother about run-getting unless the situation demanded it. This time his hitting was admirable, whilst Tom Hayward's 116 not out was proof positive that a batsman of the very first water had now "arrived." Set 224 to win on a by no means perfect pitch, and against Richardson, Briggs, Lohmann, and Hearne, the Gentlemen had a stiff task ; but W. G. gave them a first-rate start, and after 4 wickets had fallen for 141, Jackson and Ranjitsinhji hit off the last 80 without being separated. Once again Jackson had a fine match, while Ranji, who this year was destined to break the batting aggregate record, celebrated his first appearance in the match with scores of 57 and not out 40.

A heavy scoring match in the following year saw the Players run out winners by 78 runs. The amateurs' bowling was this year very weak, but there was some splendid batting, notably by Jessop, who made 67 in thirty-five minutes, and by Francis Ford, who was undefeated in the match with scores of 50 and 79. The young Wykehamist, J. R. Mason, also batted well for 62. For the Players, Shrewsbury played a masterly innings of 125, Richardson took 10 wickets, and George Hirst, thus honoured for the first time, made 34 and 61 not out.

By a happy inspiration the M.C.C. had arranged that the opening day of the 1898 match should coincide with W. G.'s fiftieth birthday. It was obviously a great occasion ; two splendid sides had been chosen, the weather, except for an hour's rain on the second morning, was on its best behaviour, and the gate exceeded all records. Against some excellent bowling by Kortright, Woods, Jackson, and Townsend, the Players, who won the toss, had to



struggle hard for runs ; but William Gunn played a great innings of 139, and the total reached 335. On the whole, the Gentlemen did well to come within 32 of that score. Lockwood and Jack Hearne bowled admirably, and even such brilliant batsmen as Stoddart, Jackson, and MacLaren found themselves pegged down and forced to be content to wait for the runs to come. But there was batting right down to No. 11 (Captain Wynyard went in No. 9 !), and almost everybody got a few. W. G. openly stated that it was a really fine performance. When the Players went in again, Gunn and Storer were once more at their very best, and added 120 runs for the third wicket. The Gentlemen, faced with the task of getting 296 in three hours, could only hope for a draw. The " Doctor " was very lame, and had a badly bruised hand, so kept himself back. Stoddart was out at once, and after MacLaren and Jackson had made something of a stand wickets fell fast, until just after half-past five 6 were down for 77. The chief agent in the collapse was Jack Hearne, who, on the now worn wicket, kept breaking the ball back sharply at a perfect length. The dice now seemed loaded against the Gentlemen, when, to the accompaniment of tremendous applause, their captain was seen moving slowly to the wicket. Two more wickets fell at once, and the match seemed as good as over ; but then Kortright came in to play the innings of his life. At first the crowd merely awaited the inevitable from over to over, but gradually as the hands of the clock crept towards seven it dawned upon them that even now the Champion and his gallant partner might save the game. Seventy-eight runs had been added, and only four minutes of play were left when Lockwood went on for a final effort. His third ball was on the short side and outside the off-stump. The fast bowler slashed at it and half hit it, a high, curling hit over Schofield Haigh's head at cover. The latter ran backwards, reached it, and the match was over. But the Champion left the field undefeated, his team with a full share of the honours of war, and everyone was agreed that the cricket throughout had been altogether worthy of the unique occasion.

In the last year of the century the Gentlemen wound up in a blaze of glory. In bowling, W. M. Bradley proved a worthy successor to Woods, whilst on the Players' side, Trott, Rhodes, and Walter Mead, all of whom had highly successful seasons, fared dismally in this their first appearance in the match. But it was the amateurs' batting that settled the issue—that and Jephson's lobs. One after another of the Gentlemen batted splendidly, and if Fry was the only man to score a century, he would probably have had W. G. to keep him company had not an unfortunate call of Mason's run him out with his score at 78. For a time the Players did fairly well in answer to that formidable total of 480, but when, with 150 on the board for only three men out, Jephson was given

the ball, a sensational collapse followed. Lob-bowling had long been out of fashion, and the Players did most of the things that schoolboys are taught not to do ; but Jephson kept a perfect length, and was supported by fielding and catching that bordered on the miraculous. In 18 overs he took 6 wickets for 21 runs, and it is necessary to go back to the days of V. E. Walker to find a parallel to his success in big cricket. The Players followed on 280 in arrears, and this time Bradley, bowling really fast, whipped five of them out very quickly, and, though the end was delayed, it was never in doubt.

So ended a great decade of cricket in that always memorable match, remarkable for the first-rate fast bowling of both sides, the fine innings of Shrewsbury, Gunn, Storer, and young Tom Hayward, but, above all, for the brilliant batting of a new generation of great amateur players, who, with but few exceptions, had learnt the game at the leading public schools.

## CHAPTER XX

### ENGLAND *v.* AUSTRALIA : 1890-1900

**W**E left Australian cricket in the doldrums ; but at last, in the winter of 1891-1892 the longed-for change came, and her sails began to fill. Lord Sheffield, who deserves to be remembered as the Mæcenas of cricketers, had for many years shown his devotion to the game. In 1883 he had inaugurated a nursery for young Sussex players in his own beautiful seat at Sheffield Park, under the management of Alfred Shaw he had taken over a team to play in Holland, where the game had for some time taken a firm, if not extensive, root, and he now undertook the much greater enterprise of an Australian tour. He persuaded the Champion to captain the side, and his appearance in Australia after an interval of eighteen years was in itself a very great stimulus to the long-flagging interest in the game ; moreover, the eleven in general was, with the exception of Gunn and Shrewsbury, practically representative. Before the matches began the Australians had a very modest opinion of their own powers ; before they were over confidence had returned in measure all the greater for having been so long in abeyance, and their defeat in the third Test Match did little to impair the supreme satisfaction produced by their victories in the first two. Those victories were fairly won, and in the main were due to a new phenomenon in Australian cricket, a most determined steadiness in their batting. Lyons certainly hit with great brilliance in all three games, but Alec Bannerman set the keynote of the play, batting with inexhaustible patience for scores of 45, 41, and 91, which took him respectively  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hours, 4 hours, and  $7\frac{1}{2}$  hours ! Of the bowlers, Ferris, like Spofforth, had settled in England, but Turner was still effective, though hardly the "Terror" on fast wickets ; and George Giffen had repented of his past aloofness and returned to bowl with tremendous perseverance and great success. Incidentally it was during this winter that the last-named achieved what is surely the greatest all-round performance in all recorded cricket of any class. Playing for South Australia against Victoria, he scored 271 with the bat, and then proceeded to take 16 wickets for 166 runs !

On the English side, both W. G. and Stoddart were in excellent

form, and Abel made history by carrying his bat right through the first innings of the second Test Match for 132 not out. Attewell, Lohmann, and Briggs all met with great bowling success, but Lohmann was not quite what he had once been; indeed, his cricketing days were by this time numbered.

If Lord Sheffield lost the rubber, it was in a good cause. Once more, fanned by success, the flame of Australian enthusiasm leapt up; a new generation of cricketers was gradually coming to the front to take the place of "Murdoch's men," a generation that could fight with their backs to the wall, as they proved at Sydney, and of whom it could be said with growing truth, "*Possunt quia posse videntur.*"

When in the spring of 1893 the eighth team, under Blackham's captaincy, sailed for England, it was hailed not merely as at last truly representative, but as something like the equal of the best of its predecessors. These cheerful expectations were not to be realized. Of the thirty-six matches played, ten ended in defeat; of the three Test Matches, one was lost, and the other two drawn by no means in the tourists' favour. The reason for this comparative failure is not far to seek. In an exceptionally dry summer the Australians had not the bowling strength to carry them through their very arduous programme, still less to compete with the exceptionally strong batting sides that England placed in the field. Turner, still the "Terror" on turning wickets, was nothing like so formidable on true grounds; George Giffen, bowling off-breaks at the wicket with four men on the on-side, was something of a novelty, and got through an immense amount of work, but he was not a match-winning bowler against the best batsmen. Harry Trott's leg-breaks were expensive. The one bowler of outstanding promise was Hugh Trumble, who took over 100 wickets, and with his great height and immaculate length always needed a lot of playing. The fatal weakness of the side lay in the lack of a fast bowler to take advantage of the consistently fast, and sometimes lively, wickets, and here they were at conspicuous disadvantage with the England Elevens, which always included two out of that great trio, Mold, Lockwood, and Richardson.

In batting the Australians did very well, and if they had no star of the first magnitude, there were seven men who topped the thousand, and there was an excellent variety in method, from the hitting of Lyons to the imperturbable defence of Alec Bannerman. These two men were together responsible for the finest performance of the tour. In the first of the two matches against the M.C.C. at Lord's the Australians had followed on in a minority of 181, and in ninety-five minutes these arrears were wiped off, Lyons's share being 149, about as fine a piece of fast-footed hitting as has ever

been seen at Lord's, as a result of which the M.C.C. were in the end desperately hard put to it to avert defeat. George Giffen did well, without really approaching his best Australian form, and H. Graham, a young cricketer new to England, won golden opinions for his brilliant off-side hitting. Against ordinary bowling the batting was really strong, and their total of 843 against Oxford and Cambridge Past and Present constituted a record for first-class cricket.

The first Test Match, at Lord's, was drawn, with England 299 runs on and two men still to bat. Graham's brilliant 107, when half his side were out for 75, with the able support of young S. E. Gregory, provided an honourable recovery; but the feature of the match was unquestionably Shrewsbury's double of 106 and 81 and F. S. Jackson's brilliant debut of 91 in this his last year of Cambridge captaincy. In the second innings Shrewsbury and Gunn added 152 runs together, and in all human probability the great "Arthur" would have completed his second century on the third morning, but rain came on, and he was bowled immediately on the resumption. Lockwood, in this his first Test Match, took 6 wickets in the one Australian innings. The game at the Oval saw the Australian bowling fairly collared. Grace and Stoddart led off with 151 for the first wicket, and after Shrewsbury, Albert Ward, and W. W. Read had all scored well, Jackson followed up his success of a month before with a grand century, completed by a hit over the ring, with Mold, the last man, in at the other end. Then on a perfect wicket Lockwood and Briggs ran through the Australians in little more than an hour and a half for the paltry total of 91, and though they fought most gallantly in the follow-on they could not avert the innings defeat. Ten days later the sides met again at Manchester, and a match remarkable for the stolidity of the English batting was left drawn somewhat in our favour. Tom Richardson signalized his appearance in international cricket by taking 10 wickets for 156 runs. Both for the M.C.C. and for England W. G. and Stoddart were in great form as an opening pair, four times putting on over 100 runs together, and twice more over 76; but the decisive factor in the Test Matches was the fast bowling of Lockwood and Richardson.

#### STODDART'S TRIUMPH.

Eighteen months later the two countries met again in one of the most remarkable series of Test Matches ever played. The team which Stoddart took out with him, though some way from being truly representative, was undoubtedly very strong; but of the bowlers, Lockwood was a complete failure, and Walter Humphreys's lobs, though immensely successful in the up-country games, were

played with such ease by the leading Australian batsmen that it was obviously useless to include him in any of the representative games. Furthermore, the Cantab, L. H. Gay, who was first choice as a wicket-keeper, showed such poor form that he had soon to be replaced by his second string, the old Oxford keeper, H. Philipson. These apparent set-backs were, however, more than counterbalanced by the last-named's excellent form behind the stumps, by the magnificent bowling of Tom Richardson, ably supported by Peel and Briggs, and lastly, by the batting, equally remarkable for its method and its resolution, of Stoddart, MacLaren, J. T. Brown, and Ward.

The start of the tour was not auspicious. Richardson was so out of form that his first 3 wickets cost him 263 runs ; Peel and Briggs carried us home against N.S.W. A great innings of 228 by MacLaren, then only twenty-two years old, was the decisive factor in a high-scoring game with Victoria, but South Australia had lowered our colours by 6 wickets, and when the first Test Match opened at Sydney on December 14th local opinion was confident of an Australian triumph. In the first half-hour Richardson shot out Harry Trott, Lyons, and Darling for 21 runs ; then Giffen and Iredale, aided by some mistakes by the wicket-keeper, added 171, and the day ended with the score 346 for 5, of which Giffen's share was 161. Next morning things went even worse for us. Young Sydney Gregory went on to make 201, and with Blackham added 154 for the ninth wicket. Against a mammoth total of 586 our batsmen fought with splendid determination, following up a first innings total of 325 with a second of 437. Ward with 75 and 117 was at his very best, but it is only fair to admit that had not Blackham received the injury which ended his first-class career, we should probably have not exceeded 300 in our second attempt. The task of making the 177 necessary for victory caused our enemy no misgiving, but so leisurely were their methods on the fifth evening that when stumps were drawn 64 runs were still wanted, though there were 8 wickets still to fall.

George Giffen has told us that when he woke on the next morning and found the sun streaming in at his window he was in ecstasy, but that the first man he met was Blackham "with a face as long as a coffee-pot." It had poured half the night, the wicket was as sticky as it could be, and once again, as before and thereafter, we had left-hand bowling to use it decisively. Peel and Briggs were unplayable, and England won by 10 runs ! It was a great and glorious success, but the Australians could fairly claim that they had been hardly used, especially George Giffen, who had scored 202 runs and taken 8 wickets for 118 runs, on physical grounds alone a prodigious achievement.

The second "test" was hardly less dramatic. Giffen put us

in on a terribly difficult wicket, and Turner and Trumble bowled us out for 75. If Australia could hold the fort for the rest of that Saturday, the promise of a fine Sunday meant a recovered wicket and a commanding lead when play was resumed. The pitch was already improved, but Tom Richardson made one of the efforts of his life, and the last Australian batsman was dismissed on the Saturday evening for a lead no greater than 48. On the Monday we set ourselves to wear the enemy down, and with Stoddart setting a splendid example and making 173 in five and a half hours, and every other man on the side getting into double figures, we left Australia 428 to win. Bruce and Trott all but raised the century for the first wicket, and with only Bruce out the board showed 190 ; then by a happy inspiration Stoddart put on Brockwell, who sent back Trott, Giffen, and Darling in a very few overs, and from that moment the tide set in our direction and we ran out winners by 94 runs.

The next two games saw us heavily defeated. At Adelaide the whole side was prostrated by the intense heat, hardly slept at all, and were beaten by 382 runs. This was Albert Trott's first Test Match ; he made 38 and 78 without being defeated, and in our last innings took 8 wickets for 43 ! At Sydney Stoddart won the toss and put his opponents in. With 6 wickets down for 51, the policy seemed abundantly justified, but then some splendid batting by Graham (105) and A. E. Trott (86 not out) pulled the game round. This was on a Saturday ; it rained all Sunday, and the wicket on Monday was impossible. Turner and Giffen did what they liked, and we were sent back for 65 and 72.

With the score two all, excitement throughout all Australia rose to fever point ; men travelled thousands of miles to reach Melbourne for the final struggle on March 1st, special trains and coasting steamers brought immense crowds from Sydney and Adelaide, and in all more than 100,000 people passed through the gates.

The wicket remained perfect throughout, and though the batsmen had always to fight for their runs against the steady bowling and keen fielding, they were always just on top during the first two innings, which saw Australia lead by 29 (414 to 385). The lead would have been far greater but for a splendid partnership by MacLaren and Peel, which added 162 runs. Giffen has admitted that his men expected to make 350 at least in their second venture. They started well enough, but on the fourth morning a high wind and clouds of dust made batting difficult, and once again Tom Richardson, sensing a crisis and a chance, bowled like a superman. Faced with the big task of getting 297 in the last innings, England lost Stoddart and Brockwell for 28 ; then Brown joined Ward, and by masterly batting the pair added 210. Ward never took a risk, but the Yorkshireman, from the very outset, went for the

bowling, and hit it to all parts of the field : his 140 was one of the greatest innings ever played in a Test Match. The last 40 runs were hit off by MacLaren and Peel, the heroes of the first innings, and England by 6 wickets won the match and the rubber. It was a great triumph, generously received.

### THE TURN OF THE TIDE.

After the Homeric series of Test Matches in the winter of 1894-1895, the form of the next Australian Eleven to visit our shores was awaited with the keenest interest. Some of the most experienced of Colonial experts, notably Tom Horan, were far from optimistic about their prospects, but though they did not as a matter of fact succeed in winning the rubber, they did well enough to make good their claim to be the best side that had visited us since the early eighties. For their success they were indebted to Harry Trott's able and genial leadership, to a new generation of young batsmen, who, adopting sternly restrained methods, fully overcame the expected handicap of inexperience, to bowling which went far beyond the most optimistic expectations, and finally to a singularly dry summer which suited them and their methods. Of the new men, Darling, Hill, and Iredale all did excellently with the bat ; McKibbin, though erratic, was, on his day, a deadly bowler ; and Ernest Jones, even in those days of real fast bowling, amazed English cricketers with his tremendous pace. Iredale was a beautiful off-side player on the most approved model of English amateur batting, and Darling and Hill were, as their subsequent performances proved, in the very top class. Both were left-handers, Darling with a most resolute and resourceful defence and great driving powers, Hill, at that time only nineteen years old, already a master of footwork and the on-side strokes, though not yet as strong on the off as he later became. They were by far the most formidable pair of left-handed batsmen that ever appeared together on the same side, and few men have played a bigger and more honourable part in international cricket. Together they played 131 Test Match innings against us, and scored well over 4,000 runs : *par nobile fratrum* ! Of the "old hands," Sydney Gregory was in great form, both with the bat and at cover ; George Giffen again performed the double of 1,000 runs and 100 wickets ; Hugh Trumble took close on 150 wickets, and in steadiness was an Australian Attewell ; whilst Harry Trott, though rather in and out, did some fine things with the bat.

After winning seven and drawing the other two of their first nine matches, the Australians came up to Lord's full of confidence for their first representative game against a strong side of the M.C.C. A total of 219 against them did not seem formidable, but



an hour later they were out for 18, the last six wickets falling for 0! Pougher and Hearne did the damage, and though the tourists fought hard to save the innings defeat, Hearne took 9 wickets in their second attempt, and Marylebone were at last revenged for their historic defeat in '78.

Admittedly the wicket on this occasion was difficult, but no such extenuation could be urged for their collapse at the beginning of the first Test Match, again at Lord's ten days later. This time the pitch was perfect, but in an hour and a quarter, by wonderful bowling, Richardson (6 for 39) and Lohmann (3 for 13) had dismissed them for 53. England, thanks to W. G., Abel, and Jackson, headed them by 239, and when three of the Australians were out again for 62, all seemed over. Then by courageous and splendid batting Trott and Gregory both got centuries, and added 221 together; but their successors did nothing, and England ran out easy winners by 7 wickets.

The second Test at Manchester was a terrific game, played throughout on a perfect wicket. Australia made 412, Iredale making 108, Giffen 80, and almost all the rest contributing useful scores. In reply we could do no better than 231, of which that splendid wicket-keeper and batsman "Dick" Lilley was responsible for 65. At the close of the second evening we had lost Grace, Stoddart, Abel, and Jackson, and were still 72 runs behind. The third day saw perhaps as great, certainly as tense, a struggle as has ever been fought out in a Test Match. At one end one after another of the English batsmen fought to keep up their wickets, but none of them could reach 20; at the other Ranjitsinhji played an innings of which no other batsman in the world was capable. For over three hours he was absolute master of the Australian bowling, he never gave a semblance of a chance, and at the end he was undefeated with 154. His cutting and driving were brilliant in the extreme, but most wonderful of all was his hooking of Jones's terrific bowling. Time after time he flicked him right off his face to the boundary; one ball which he missed actually broke the skin of the lobe of his ear, but, as he naïvely explained to Lilley after it was over, "it was very important to get the head well behind the ball in order to get a good sight of it!"

The Australians wanted 125 to win. They lost 4 wickets for 45, 7 for 100, and then by desperately dogged batting Trumble and Kelly made the last 25; but it took them an hour to get them, and had not Lilley dropped the latter—his one mistake in a wonderful display of wicket-keeping—anything might have happened. Of Richardson's performance in this match I have already spoken, 13 wickets in 110 overs in something over seven hours: no finer example of courage, stamina, accuracy, and pace is to be found in all the annals of the game.

In marked contrast to the two preceding games, the third and decisive meeting at the Oval was fought out on a rain-ruined wicket throughout. It was preceded by the most notorious of all cricket "strikes," when five of the leading professionals almost on the eve of the match issued an ultimatum to the Surrey Club, who were charged with the selection of the side, demanding £20 for the match, or just double the amount hitherto paid. Fortunately three of the recalcitrants withdrew in time before the uncompromising attitude of the committee, but Lohmann and Gunn were obdurate and dropped out. The first innings of both sides were remarkable for the collapse that followed a fine opening start. England had 69 up for but one man out, but were all sent home for 145, chiefly by Trumble. Darling and Iredale actually made 70 for the first Australian wicket, only to see their nine successors dismissed for 49 more runs. If the wicket had been difficult in the first innings, it was worse in the second, and we were all out for 84, leaving the enemy but 111 to win. In less than one hour seven of them were out for 14, and only some desperate hitting by the last man raised the score to 44. Peel and Hearne took 18 wickets in the match, Trumble 12, and very seldom have two such fine sides of batsmen found themselves throughout so helpless.

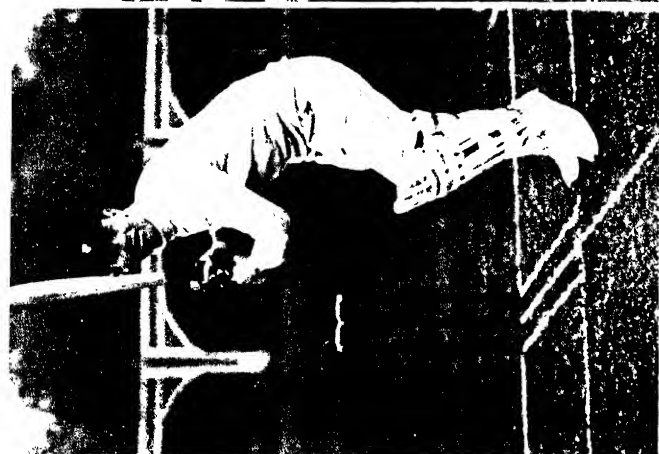
Thus once again the "Ashes" remained in our keeping, but the Australians by making England follow-on on a hard wicket in the second game and by their unbeaten record in all their county fixtures had clearly shown that their new generation of cricketers were worthy to rank with the heroes of '82, and that the supremacy we had enjoyed for fourteen unbroken years was now in serious jeopardy.

In the winter of 1897-1898 the tide finally turned, and the strong side captained once more by Stoddart, after winning the opening Test Match, went down by decisive margins in all the other four. The English batting was good: Ranjitsinhji scored 175 in his first innings in the first Test, and with MacLaren averaged over 50 both for those fixtures and the tour as a whole. Hayward did very well, and the two young amateurs, Mason and N. F. Druce, without quite fulfilling all that was expected of them, made many useful scores. But our bowling was quite ineffective, and in eleven-a-side matches 25 was the lowest average per wicket. Richardson struggled manfully, but never approached his form of 1894-1895; Hearne was very steady; but the change bowlers, Hayward, Hirst, Briggs, Wainwright, and Mason, were, in results, almost negligible. Australia, on the other hand, were now really formidable. Their two young left-handers, Hill and Darling, took terrible toll of the English bowling, especially in the Test Matches, in three of which their batting clearly played a decisive part. For twelve innings

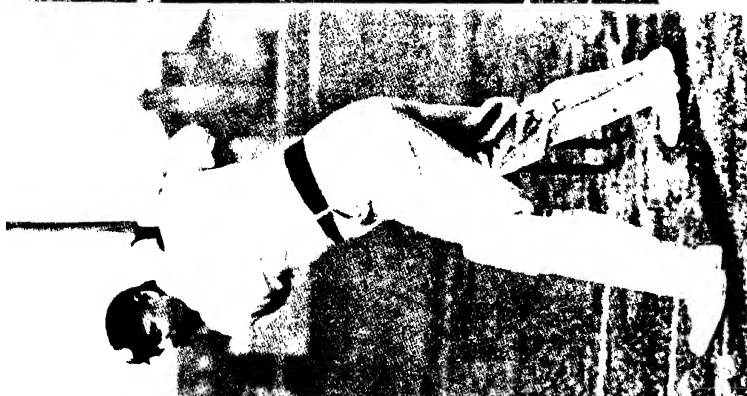
against us Hill averaged 75, and Darling was not far behind him. Kanjitsinhji, in the account which he published of the team's experiences, was unstinted in his admiration for them both. Darling's driving was quite magnificent, Hill was a master of every on-side stroke, and each alike showed a marked predilection for fast bowling. In bowling, Jones and Trumble were once again thorns in our side, whilst in Noble and Howell there now appeared two new men of mark. Noble's curious flight—he was one of the first of modern swervers—and Howell's great power of finger-spin in his break-backs suggested a future that was fully realized. Finally, it was, even for Australia, an exceptionally hot summer, and the stifling nights robbed our men of sleep and left them jaded and dull-eyed in the morning.

The tenth Australian team, under Darling's captaincy, was in all respects a great combination, and by winning the rubber against us in England, challenged comparison with the famous side of 1882. They had not quite such a quartet of bowlers as Spofforth, Boyle, Palmer, and Garrett, nor any hitter of quite the calibre of Bonnor, Massie, or Percy McDonnell, but their bowling, Jones, Trumble, Howell, Noble, and McLeod, was very formidable, whilst in a dry summer—and there have been few drier than 1899—their batting all through was so sound and consistent that it was practically impossible to defeat them in three days. As a matter of fact they were only beaten three times in all their thirty-five matches: by Essex in their first county engagement, by Surrey in the return fixture at the Oval, and by Kent in the Canterbury Week, and on each occasion the wicket was in the bowlers' favour. The eleven came in for a certain amount of criticism for lack of enterprise, and certainly they played sixteen drawn games, but the great majority of these were in the latter half of their tour, when the effects of their arduous and practically uninterrupted programme were beginning to make themselves felt.

For the first time in England five Test Matches were played, and the fact that four of them were drawn suggested the still relevant question whether it would not be better to content ourselves with three and play them to a finish; as then, so now, however, considerations of gate-money prevailed. The Australians outplayed us in the first, annihilated us in the second, and then against the determined counter-offensive of the English batsmen set themselves dourly and successfully to hold on to their lead. Nottingham saw W. G.'s last and Wilfred Rhodes's first appearance in international cricket. We went into the field without a fast bowler of any sort, and in a game of moderate scoring Australia were able to declare in their second innings, leaving us 290 to get. Grace, Jackson, Gunn, and Fry were sent back in under an hour for 19



V. F. TRUMPER





runs, and only a wonderful innings of 93 not out by Ranjitsinhji saved us from defeat. Clem Hill, with scores of 52 and 80, played the biggest part on the other side.

In the second game, at Lord's, the Australians finally and decisively broke the spell of failure which has persistently dogged them on that ground, and it is now nearly thirty years since we beat them in a Test Match at our own headquarters. They virtually won the game before luncheon on the first day, when, in face of Jones's terrific bowling on a very fast pitch, we lost 6 wickets for 66 runs. Jackson, then as ever revelling in a crisis, and Jessop, in this his first Test Match, added 95 runs, but a total of 206 was obviously inadequate. The selectors had tempted Providence by relying for their fast bowling on the Cambridge captain alone—and he was not even sound at the time—and though we started well enough, Noble played doggedly and with Hill tamed our attack, and then the latter and young Victor Trumper each made 135 runs. It was Trumper's third innings in an international game, and before he had batted for half an hour it was obvious that a new star of unsurpassed brilliance and charm had joined the cluster of the Southern Cross. When England went in again the wicket had started to crumble. Once more Fry, Ranji, and Townsend failed completely, and though Jackson again played well, it was left for MacLaren, the new English captain, and Tom Hayward to save the innings defeat. MacLaren's innings of 88 not out was magnificent, but Australia won by 10 wickets.

The third match, at Leeds, was played on a rain-affected wicket, and limited to two days, no play being possible on the Saturday. Five changes were made in the England side. Young of Essex, once a sailor, and now a fastish left-hand bowler of considerable "bite" and devil, bowled admirably, though with provoking luck. Only Worrall (76) and Hill (34) did anything for Australia, and the end of the first innings saw us with the valuable lead of 48: 34 of these were wiped off without loss when Worrall was grandly caught in the deep field, and then Jack Hearne did the hat-trick with Noble, Gregory, and Clem Hill, the first two batsmen thereby "making spectacles." The match seemed over, but Trumper, Trumble, and Laver played up splendidly and gradually pulled the game round. We were set 177 to win, got 19 of them without loss, and then rain ended the match.

In the last two games we won the toss, made a big score, made Australia follow on, and then found that, with their backs to the wall, we could not force them on to their knees. At Old Trafford we lost 4 wickets for 50, then Hayward and F. S. Jackson pulled things round, and the Surrey man went on to score 130, a wonderful innings, combining stern defence at first with beautiful driving when things looked brighter. Australia were outed by Young

and Bradley, the Kent fast bowler, for 196, but batting with the utmost tenacity in the follow-on, easily saved the game. Noble's defence was a marvel of restraint: he was, in his two innings of 60 not out and 89, eight and half hours at the wicket.

In the final match at the Oval the English batting rose into glory. Jackson and Hayward opened the ball with 185 for the first wicket, both of them getting centuries, and the score at the close of play was 428 for 4! Next day nearly 150 were quickly added, and then Australia started on her long and arduous rear-guard fight. In the first innings Syd Gregory (117) and Darling, in the second Noble once again, and in both Worrall and MacLeod eschewed all risks and gradually wore down the English attack. Lockwood in the first innings they never managed to tame, and his record of 50 overs for 71 runs and 7 wickets is one of the finest things in all Test Match cricket. Unfortunately his leg gave way under the strain, and Bradley could never find the form that he had shown at Old Trafford. The Oval wicket lasted as only the Oval wicket can, and though at last it began to wear and Rhodes got 3 wickets cheaply, it was then too late: Australia had saved the match and the "Ashes" remained in their keeping. It had been a fine trial of strength between powerful elevens. England had on paper at least a very strong array of batsmen, but on several occasions the early men failed. Even when we had apparently got on top, the lack of absolutely first-rate fast bowling left us without the power to break through the enemy's most stubborn and stoutly fought defences.

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE GOLDEN AGE OF BATTING

RANJI, FRY, JESSOP.

**B**EFORE we become immersed in the detail of our last epoch, it may, I hope, be of some little interest to attempt some general estimate of English cricket as it was in the opening years of this century, and to appreciate, if we can, in what ways it differed from the game as we know it to-day. In the first place, then, the County Championship had by this time extended itself to something very like its present dimensions, and complaints were already to be heard that our bowlers were being bowled to death. More wearing, however, than the actual amount of work they were called upon to do, were the conditions under which they had to do it. This was the era of the perfect wicket. The preparation of the pitch by such artificial aids as marl and liquid manure had now been reduced to a fine art, and whereas when the Champion first began to roll off his centuries there were not more than five grounds in England where run-getting was positively easy in fine weather, there were now more than double that number on which, given fine weather throughout, two evenly matched county sides might fairly be backed to fail to arrive at a decision in three days. Certainly the proportion of drawn games was very high, and, as MacLaren pointed out in an interesting article contributed to *Wisden* for 1905, it was the last four or five hours of play, with no prospect of a result, that tended to kill our bowlers and handicapped them so heavily as compared with the Australians with their much smaller first-class programme and the stimulus of a certain finish in all their games.

Indeed, the M.C.C. had already taken notice of what was really becoming a menace to the well-being of the game, and had issued a memorandum to the county secretaries deprecating the preparation of wickets in any way except by water and the roller. But to such an extent had the bat asserted its supremacy over the ball at this time, that in 1901 a far more drastic reform was contemplated. At a very largely attended general meeting of the M.C.C., held at the beginning of the season, Alfred Lyttelton proposed and John



Shuter seconded a motion so to alter Law 24 that, to secure a verdict of lbw, the bowler need no longer pitch the ball between wicket and wicket. The debate, reported in full in the contemporary *Wisden*, was fought out with equal enthusiasm and ability; amongst other well-known figures, R. A. H. Mitchell supported the proposal, A. G. Steel and P. F. Warner opposed it. In the end it was carried—and by 259 votes to 188—but as a two-thirds majority was, and is still, necessary for any alteration in the rules, the reform had to wait another 34 years.

In 1903 the county captains re-opened the attack. This time the suggestion was to widen the wicket from 8 inches to 9. The M.C.C. Committee whole-heartedly supported the idea, but, though now both Lord Harris and Steel were on the side of reform, and rather more than half the 400 members present at the general meeting backed them, the requisite majority was again wanting, and the *status quo* continued. A wet season that summer, and the gradual abandonment of artificial preparation of wickets, combined to allay anxiety.

But at least some of the explanation lay in the personal balance between bowlers and batsmen. It was not that our bowling in the opening years of the century was weak—far from it. A batsman who played regularly in county cricket for the decade 1895–1905 would, I believe, have been far more severely tested than anyone could be to-day. On difficult wickets, Briggs, Blythe, Wilfred Rhodes, and Sam Hargreave of Warwickshire, to say nothing of Dennett and Cranfield, were certainly a more formidable combination than any left-handers he would now have to face. The off-theory was being to some extent abandoned, and a crop of right-hand leg-break bowlers was arising to confront him with new problems. Of these Charles Townsend was the prototype, Braund the best, and C. M. Wells and Vine both very good. George Hirst had in 1901 suddenly discovered that he could swerve, and, from being an ordinarily good fast bowler, became a positive portent in the cricket world. As one batsman plaintively remarked, “I don’t really see how one can be expected to play a ball which, when it leaves the bowler’s arm, appears to be coming straight, but when it reaches the wicket is like a very good throw-in from cover-point!” He was a terror to even the best of the opening batsmen; if they escaped being clean bowled, there were the serried ranks of his leg-traps to negotiate—a new proposition, but not “leg theory” and still less “body line.” The right-handed swerve, too, was beginning to appear, on the model of M. A. Noble, and no one to-day can bowl it better than did Ted Arnold of Worcestershire.

But by far the greatest contrast between then and now is surely presented by the fast bowlers. If we are not to-day quite so badly off for real speed as we were when cricket was resumed after the

war, yet neither in quantity nor quality can we compare in this respect with the situation that our batsmen of the last generation had to face. In those days practically every county side possessed a bowler of real pace—pace, that is to say, great enough to make him definitely unpleasant to anything like a faint heart. Let us recall some of them: Surrey—Richardson and Lockwood, followed by N. A. Knox; Lancashire—Mold and Walter Brearley; Middlesex—well, Albert Trott's fast ball was as fast as anybody's; Essex—C. J. Kortright, and then "Sailor" Young and Buckenham; Kent—W. M. Bradley and Fielder; Sussex—Bland; Warwickshire—Field; Worcestershire—George Wilson, a fast round-arm slinger with a devastatingly late swerve, and, after him, Dick Burrows; Yorks—J. T. Brown junior; Notts—no one of supreme pace, but Tom Wass would be called fast now, and spun the ball from leg to boot; Derbyshire—Warren and Bestwick; Leicestershire—Woodcock; Gloucester—G. L. Jessop; Somerset—Gill. It is safe to say that the great majority of these fast bowlers would, at his best, be to-day something of a phenomenon, and a strong candidate for a place in our England Eleven; yet a quarter of a century ago they were bowling up and down the country. They were all in the day's work, and our batsmen were wholly undismayed.

To judge from an article contributed by D. L. A. Jephson to the 1901 *Wisden*, the fielding of the period left a good deal to be desired. Possibly the stalemate of the perfect wicket and the vast number of drawn matches was conducive to a spirit of lethargy on the part of some elevens. Nevertheless there were a great number of fine fieldsmen playing, and particularly fine slips and deep-fields, the two areas in which we are weakest to-day. Now, it is certain that on good wickets the former play much the largest part of all fieldsmen in capturing the wickets of the best batsmen. The placing of the field at the beginning of the century was still more orthodox and less elastic than such as we are accustomed to to-day. On-side play had not yet developed to any very great extent, and the scoring strokes chiefly to be guarded against were still the straight-drive, the off-drive, and the cut. The Australians had not yet, under the inspiration of Noble, shown us how to adjust the field to any particular batsman, on the system of the inner and the outer ring, which they subsequently worked out with such cramping efficiency. Still, there were great captains in the land, and men like A. C. MacLaren, Hawke, MacGregor, A. O. Jones, Ranjitsinhji, Sam Woods, and Harry Foster were very much alive to any situation, and very far from likely to make the batsman's task any easier than it had necessarily to be.

Neither excellence of pitches, nor weakness of attack, can supply an adequate explanation of what, to my thinking, is the outstanding feature of English cricket at this time—the superiority

of bat over ball. The truest explanation is, I believe, the simplest, that our batting was at least as good as, if not better than, at any period before or since. The latter end of most county sides were not so difficult to get rid of as they are now, when the genuine non-striker seems almost to be disappearing from our ranks, but the first half-dozen or so on most sides included two or three men of really outstanding ability. The general level of defence on turning pitches may not have reached the present level, but as against this we must set the fact that there were far more aggressive batsmen playing—men who would use their feet and would never surrender the initiative to the bowler without a struggle, whose “half-hour” was as good as many of our modern players’ “after-noon.” Above all, on fast wickets would the contrast be apparent. The great majority of the leading batsmen had no use for the short back-lift, the double shuffle with the feet, the push for one, or the tickle for two. They were masters of the drive; the cut was not yet *démodé*, and the now common spectacle of the medium-paced bowler with no man on the boundary would have been laughed at and hit out of court.

If the general level of batsmanship was high at the beginning of the century, the relative level of amateur to professional batsmen was higher still. In the season of 1935 there were only five amateurs in the first thirty places in the batting order; in 1900 there were eighteen amateurs in the first twenty, while two years later, of the thirty-four men who averaged 30 or over for the year, only ten were professionals.

Collectively, then, amateur batting outstripped professional; selectively, the amateurs’ lead was equally marked. One instance must suffice. Of the side that went into the field for the first Test Match of 1902—considered by many the best we have ever produced—the men chosen for their batting alone were, with the exception of Johnny Tyldesley, all amateurs—MacLaren, Jackson, Jessop, Fry, and Ranjitsinhji.

Of the first two we have already spoken, but, wonderful players as they were, they never bulked quite so big in the imagination of contemporary England as did the last trio, and, inasmuch as first-class cricket depends for public support to a great extent upon the personalities and methods of its greatest exponents, these three wonderful batsmen perhaps did more for the popularity of the game than any cricketers since the Champion himself. Wherever they went, crowds flocked to see them. With Gilbert Jessop it was a glorious gamble; with the Prince and Charles Fry on the same side, the spectators must have felt that their entrance money was on the nearest approach to a certainty that the game was ever likely to afford. As a matter of fact, in their greatest seasons together, 1899, 1900, and 1901, they practically never failed; if

one was dismissed for a single figure, the other would generally come along with a century, often with two. But as a rule they both got runs, and hour after hour the bowlers would pound away on the then utterly pitiless Hove wicket, sheer artistry at one end, supreme self-mastery and physical perfection at the other; and day after day, on every variety of wicket, and against every type of bowling, the telegraph would proclaim the greatest pair of batsmen that ever played together on the same county side.

K. S. Ranjitsinhji, as he was then universally known, came to England in his twentieth year, having played the game as a boy in India, with a fixed determination to master the art of batting. It is a popular fallacy that he was a heaven-born genius who had no need for apprenticeship at all; as a matter of fact, no cricketer has ever practised more arduously. He would engage the best professional bowlers for a month or more in the spring, and bat against them for hours every day, to learn the defence which his Indian experience had not given him. Of course, he was blest with supreme natural gifts, and an alert and receptive mind, physique that was at once strong, supple, and perfectly co-ordinated, and, as a result, a lightning quickness of conception and execution that no man, not even Victor Trumper, has ever quite equalled. But it was by unremitting application that he trained himself to make the utmost of these innate advantages. He was underrated as a batsman at Cambridge, though his slip-fielding was something of a wonder; and, though he did win his "blue" in '93, it was not until two years later, when fully qualified for Sussex, that he leapt in a single month into fame. At his very first appearance for his county—against the M.C.C. at Lord's—he scored 77 not out and 150, and from that start he never once looked back. In the following season, 1896, he broke W. G.'s record aggregate with 2,780 runs for an average of 57; but his greatest years were 1899 and 1900, in both of which he passed the 3,000, in the latter averaging 87 for forty innings, and scoring over 200 five times. Of these great scores, the most remarkable was an innings against Middlesex at Hove. It was the last day of the match; the wicket was considerably affected by a heavy thunderstorm, and he was opposed by Albert Trott, Hearne, and Rawlin. Overnight, Fry and Killick had scored well, but on the Saturday the rest of the side found run-getting terribly difficult: Vine scored 17, no one else got into double figures, and the Prince got 202! One more story illustrating his supreme ascendancy. In the next season Sussex had had a dreadful gruel in the field at Taunton, and at the end of the second day it was agreed that they should get their own back on the morrow, and that their captain should make 300. The latter complacently agreed; he failed to keep his promise by 15 runs, but he was still not out!

In method, Ranji was a law unto himself. His extraordinary quickness of eye and mind allowed him to do things utterly impracticable for others. He would play back to the fastest bowlers on the fastest wicket, and never had to hurry his stroke ; his cutting was marvellous ; his leg-side play has never been approached, and he broke the hearts of the best bowlers by the way he deflected their fastest break-backs to the boundary. It was not a glance, as we now understand the term : the ball was met with the full face of the bat, and at the psychological moment those wrists of steel pivoted, and the ball sped away to leg. But it is less commonly realized that he was always a wonderful driver, and, indeed, in his later years discarded defence more and more for attack, and often played the innings of a pure hitter, only that it was backed throughout by his marvellously resourceful back-play.

It is an open secret, which he himself would be the first to admit, that it was his association with the Indian Prince that raised Charles Fry from a good into a great player. Gifted with keen powers of observation, an acute and highly analytical mind, unlimited resolution and patience, he was supremely calculated to profit by the example of genius, and it is by no means mere coincidence that back-play and driving were the predominating features of his batting. It was not that Fry could not play the off-strokes ; in the wet season of 1903 his driving past mid-off and extra cover was one of the finest things about his play, whilst in the final Test Match against the 1905 Australian side he further confounded the critics by his brilliant cutting in an innings of 144. But, on the whole, he concentrated on the straight drive and on every variety of on-side stroke, finding that type of game the safest and at the same time most profitable, and it was just this ability to know what he could do best, to concentrate on that, and to do it supremely well, that made him for years the greatest run-getting machine that modern cricket has known. His marvellous physique made him impervious to fatigue, his self-control never slackened. More markedly than any of his contemporaries he adopted a distinct secondary position at the wicket, and as he stood there, upright and perfectly balanced, with the bat lifted back over the middle stump, he presented to the unfortunate bowler a most dominating and discouraging figure.

Statistically, his record is stupendous, though he played by no means as regularly as some others ; let him get 30, and he was as likely as not to get 200. His defence was as consummate as his driving was terrible ; he mastered the best bowlers almost as readily as he took toll from the worst. Five times he exceeded 2,000 runs in the season, and once, in 1901, 3,000. This was his greatest year, in which he scored six consecutive hundreds. Five times in

his career he scored 100 in each innings of a match, and on three other occasions he only missed doing so by one run.

It is one of the tragedies of English cricket that, with his many other interests and activities, he could never manage to visit Australia. Had he gone there, and once become acclimatized to the conditions, there is no saying what he might not have done.

Had C. L. Townsend been able to play regularly for his county in the years when he had become an England batsman, it is possible that he and Gilbert Jessop together would have played almost as big a rôle in Gloucestershire cricket as did Ranji and Fry for Sussex. As things were, Jessop had to shoulder the greater part of the burden alone. Inevitably, from the nature of his method, he was a match-winner rather than a consistent match-saver, and the county, with their weak bowling, could not avoid defeat often enough to be a serious rival throughout a season to the strongest sides. As a hitter, Jessop stands absolutely alone; others, such as C. I. Thornton and Bonnor, may have driven the ball farther and higher, but no cricketer that has ever lived hit it so often, so fast, and with such a bewildering variety of strokes. His very stance, like a panther's crouch, bespoke aggression. The secret of his hitting lay in his speed, of eye, of foot, and of hand. He combined in a unique degree strength and flexibility of shoulder, arm, and wrist. Length had no meaning for him; it was the length ball he hit best, and he hit it where the whim or the placing of the field suggested. One moment he would drive it along the ground or lift it, straight or with pull, over the deep-field's head; the next he would drop on his right knee and sweep the off-ball round to square-leg, or lie back and cut it like a flash past third man. It was impossible to keep him quiet, impossible to set the field for him. When he was in form, the best bowlers were as helpless against him as the worst; he hit them just when and where he pleased. Nowadays we call a batsman a quick scorer if he makes 40 runs in an hour; the "Croucher's" average rate in any of his best innings was approximately double! In his little brochure on Gloucester County Cricket Mr. Ashley-Cooper has summarized his greatest feats. They make almost unbelievable reading. Four times he scored 100 in both innings of a county match, and on each occasion at the rate of about 100 an hour; against the West Indian team of 1900 he made 157 runs between 3.30 p.m. and 4.30 p.m.; and in the same year he made over 100 at Lord's in just over an hour. His longest innings, 286 against Sussex at Brighton in 1903, took him less than three hours; but perhaps his most astonishing feat of sustained fast scoring was his 191 in ninety minutes against the Players of the South, at Hastings, in 1907.

His century which won the Oval Test Match of 1902 was, of

course, one of the most famous innings of all history; but almost equally notable was his 93 at Lord's against the famous quartet of South African googly bowlers in 1907. In that innings he received only sixty-three balls! The Australians were outspoken in their opinion that no representative side was complete without him. One other point in connection with his batting deserves to be noticed. His capacity for quick scoring was so incalculable that he must have saved many a match before the last innings was ever begun. His opponents simply did not dare venture a normal declaration, knowing as they did that an hour or less of Jessop might confound their best calculations. As a fieldsman at extra cover he has never been equalled. His return—and it was often so masked as to deceive the runners—was so fast that he could afford to stand much deeper than the average good field, and so cut off the four as well as save the single. As a fast bowler he was good enough to be selected, even if erroneously, to play that rôle for England.

I have dwelt at some length on these three great cricketers because I conceive them to have exercised an unequalled influence upon their generation. Gilbert Jessop was the living embodiment of that sensationalism which will always make the most direct and compelling appeal to the man who pays his shilling and wants his money's worth. The two great Sussex batsmen, by their mastery of back-play and the on-side game, orientated the field afresh, and, by their influence on bowlers and example to batsmen, laid down the lines which, for good or evil, their successors have followed in the development of "modern cricket."

## CHAPTER XXII

### ENGLAND *v.* AUSTRALIA: 1901-1912

THE nineteenth century had closed with the eclipse of English cricket under Darling's splendid combination. In 1901 MacLaren accepted an invitation which the M.C.C. had previously declined, and took out to Australia a team which in fielding, at least, could bear comparison with any on record. Unfortunately, the batting was not really representative, for with the exception of the captain, none of the leading amateur batsmen could get away, whilst pressure from their county committee prevented Hirst and Rhodes from accepting the invitation, and the bowling was in consequence irreparably weakened. MacLaren sprang one surprise on the cricket world when, on the strength of what he had done in the Lancashire League, he took out Barnes, and had it not been for a physical breakdown in the middle of the third Test Match, from which that bowler never recovered, it is conceivable that this bold experiment might have regained for us the "Ashes." Certain it is that after winning the first Test Match by an innings, and losing the second rather easily, we were well placed in the third when the injury to Barnes's knee removed him for good, and on a wicket on which he must have been formidable, Australia managed to make the 315 runs needed in the last innings. A sorry batting collapse for 99 in our second innings on a perfect Sydney wicket cost us the fourth match and the "rubber," whilst in the last we had only to get 211, but rain made the task beyond our powers. In the two Tests in which he bowled, Barnes took 19 wickets for 17 apiece, and was hailed as the best English bowler yet seen in Australia; but after his collapse our attack was reduced to Blythe, who for some time suffered from a damaged hand, John Gunn, then of medium pace, and Braund. The latter was often expensive, but worked untiringly, and had a fine tour with both bat and ball. Hayward was very sound, but Tyldesley did not really get going till late in the trip; and of the batsmen, MacLaren really stood alone, and once again proved himself the finest batsman in the world on the Sydney wicket. The Australians owed almost everything to Noble and Trumble, who were in tremendous form with the ball, Noble in the second Test Match taking



7 for 17 and 6 for 60; whilst of the batsmen, Clem Hill made successive scores of 99, 98, and 97 against us. Duff scored 100 in his first Text Match, and Armstrong, in this his first season of representative cricket, headed the batting averages against us.

### THE GREAT MATCHES OF 1902.

#### *Victor Trumper*

It will always be a matter of dispute whether the team brought over by Darling in 1902 was, or was not, the best that has yet represented Australia in this country. No doubt the bowling was not so strong as in 1882, but the batting was immeasurably better, and very much more aggressive in character and taking in style than it had been on the successful tour of 1899. Moreover, it is to be remembered that the summer was a wretched one, and in conditions far removed from those to which they were accustomed at home, the Australians yet managed to defeat England at a time when our own cricket was exceptionally strong. Darling was once again a great captain, able to inspire his men with his own devotion to the game and his own dogged courage in time of stress. Trumble again proved himself as accurate a bowler as there was living; in Saunders they had discovered one of the very few left-hand bowlers of real class that the Dominion has produced; Noble was again a tower of strength with bat and ball, resourceful and determined as ever at a crisis; the fielding was first-rate, and the discipline of the side perfect; but amidst all their virtues and accomplishments, Victor Trumper's batting stood out by itself.

From start to finish of the season, on every sort of wicket, against every type of bowling, Trumper entranced the eye, inspired his side, demoralized his enemies, and made run-getting appear the easiest thing in the world. To try to reduce to words the art of this consummate batsman is almost an impertinence, but to those who never saw him at his best I would suggest that they should study the glorious series of photographs of Trumper in action contained in Fry and Beldam's *Great Batsmen*. From these they will catch at least a reflection of the ease, the balance, the perfect naturalness that made him perhaps the most fascinating batsman to watch in the history of the game. I do not think I can do better than to quote two verdicts passed upon him by two contemporaries, each of them great batsmen, and each, from his different angle, a master of analysis in criticism. "He had no style, and yet he was all style," says Mr. Fry. "He had no fixed canonical method of play, he defied all orthodox rules, yet every stroke he played satisfied the ultimate criterion of style—the minimum of effort, the maximum of effect." And Mr. Warner: "No one ever played so

naturally. Batting seemed just part of himself, and he was as modest as he was magnificent."

The Australians opened their tour well, but towards the end of May met with a series of disasters which might have finally unnerved most sides. In the first Test Match, England, represented by a side that many experts regard as the best she has yet put into the field, made 376, to which, as Birmingham was the arena, Tyldesley naturally contributed a century. Then on a good wicket, though in atrocious light, Rhodes and Hirst ran through the side for 36, and only a virtually blank last day saved them from annihilation. Three days later Yorkshire beat them at Bradford, then influenza bowled over several of their side, and it was no secret that when they came up to Lords' for the second Test Match they were really out of heart. That match was utterly ruined by rain, but thereafter the weather improved, and with it the Australian's health and form returned, and at Sheffield, at the beginning of July, they drew first blood by the margin of 143 runs. Certainly England had the worst of the luck, bad light on the first evening and the effects of rain on the next morning accounting in some measure for a sorry collapse; but Trumper (62) and Hill (119) batted most brilliantly on the second day, and then, with the wicket suddenly going to pieces and Noble at his very best, no one but MacLaren and Jessop could make 15.

The Manchester match at the end of July is one of the most famous in the whole series. The selectors, it is now agreed, made a questionable choice in preferring Lionel Palairet to an all-rounder such as Hirst, a mistake in not picking Jessop, and a definite blunder in playing Fred Tate, a steady, but by no means deadly, bowler, an indifferent batsman, and an unreliable catch. Barnes, who had bowled finely at Sheffield, would surely have won this match had he been chosen.

Australia were lucky to win the toss on a soft, easy wicket, and so grandly did Trumper and Duff bat that 135 were obtained for the first wicket, and at lunch the score was 173! Subsequently Darling hit hard for 51, but a great piece of bowling by Lockwood shot out the last five batsmen, and the total just fell short of the third hundred. The wicket was now drying fast, and with Trumble bowling a perfect length and Saunders breaking very quickly from leg, England lost 5 wickets for 44, and only a great effort by F. S. Jackson and Braund held the fort till stumps were drawn.

The next day was a glorious triumph for England. The wicket, though better, was far from perfect, but the two batsmen added 115 more runs, and then Jackson, with little support at the other end, went for the bowling, and when finally dismissed had made 128, the finest of all his great performances in the Test games. With a lead of 37, Australia went in again at four o'clock, and in

half an hour Trumper, Duff, and Hill, who in the first innings had made 223 between them, had been sent back by Lockwood for a total of 10.

Then came the first decisive incident in the match. Braund was bowling, and at his special request Palaret, who was fielding deep on the leg-side, was brought up to short-leg, his normal place in Somerset matches, and Tate was dropped back in his stead. With the total at 16, Darling hit Braund high but straight to the Sussex bowler, who dropped the catch. The Australian captain and Gregory then added 54 priceless runs; but, even so, when stumps were drawn their side was only 122 runs on with 8 wickets down, and England, thanks to their magnificent recovery, and, above all, to Lockwood's bowling, seemed on the high road to victory.

But that night it rained heavily; play was not possible till noon, and what had been thought an easy task now became a matter for the most anxious speculation. The Australian innings was finished off for the addition of a single, and in fifty minutes before lunch MacLaren and Palaret made 36 of the 124 needed without being separated. On play being resumed Palaret was soon out. With the weather very threatening, first MacLaren and then Abel pushed along fast, and the total was 92 before the fourth wicket fell. Then Trumble and Saunders bowled superbly, and Jackson, Braund, Abel, and Lockwood were sent back for but 17 runs. Rhodes and Lilley made three good strokes that brought in 7, and then, off a fine leg-hit, Lilley was gloriously caught by Clem Hill, running "all out" on the square-leg boundary. Eight to win, and Tate, the last hope of England, is leaving the pavilion when heavy rain drives the players from the field. An agonizing wait of three quarters of an hour, then a break in the clouds, and back go the players for the last and fatal round. Tate faces Saunders, edges his first ball for a four to leg, survives the next two, but the fourth comes a bit with the arm, keeps very low, and the match is over.

A margin of three runs had settled the issue against us at Manchester, but Fate had still a trick in store, and the glory of our win at the Oval went far to compensate us for the loss of the "Ashes." This time the two men who should never have been left out at Manchester, Jessop and Hirst, were in the ranks, and by gallantry, enterprise, and dogged determination they fought the finest rearguard action in the history of Test cricket.

Australia had done well enough on the Monday to score 324, and when rain fell heavily in the early hours of Tuesday morning we were fighting for our lives at once. Tyldesley and Hirst hit well, but when our seventh wicket fell we still needed 38 to save the follow, and to follow on meant almost inevitable and early defeat. Then Hill, whose immortal catch had won the last match, missed Lockwood at long-on, and we squeezed past the danger-post by 9

runs. The wicket was difficult, Trumble bowled magnificently the fielding was splendid, and our batting performance by no means inconsiderable; still Australia were well on top, and with a day and a half to go they set out very sedately to make assurance doubly sure. But they had reckoned without Lockwood, who had one of his great days, and before stumps were drawn that night 8 wickets had fallen for 114 runs. It was a fine evening when the players left the Oval, and there was a fair chance that the wicket might recover; but Jessop has told us how, as he and some of his colleagues sat down to dinner, the clouds opened again, and with them the flood-gates of our wrath against fate.

Next morning the last two Australians were incontinently fired out by Lockwood, but the 263 runs against us seemed all too many on the turning pitch, and the first hour of our innings amply reinforced that estimate. Saunders found a length at once, and MacLaren, Palaret, and Tyldesley were back in the pavilion, all clean bowled, for 16; Hayward soon followed, and Braund, who had fought so stubbornly in the first innings, also failed. Half the side were now out for 48, and the match seemed over.

It was now that Jessop joined Jackson; there were twenty minutes still to go to luncheon. Jessop went for the bowling at once, but far from convincingly, giving a chance of stumping to Kelly, and a difficult catch to Trumper at long-off, but the interval found the two still together.

After lunch the rôles of the two batsmen were reversed: Jackson, who had played with superb resource in the morning, was in frequent trouble, but Jessop "found" the ball at once, and went ahead at a furious pace. With Trumble he showed a modicum of restraint, but Saunders had a terrible time; at one time he would drive him straight, at another lie down and sweep him to the on-boundary, and then step back and cut him to the ropes. With the total 157 Jackson left, and was succeeded by George Hirst. Before he had scored Hirst survived a most confident appeal for lbw to Trumble bowling off-breaks round the wicket, but thereafter he never looked back. Jessop captured his second 50 in 20 minutes, and then pushed a ball into square-leg's hands. He had scored 104 out of 139 in 75 minutes, an innings that will be famous as long as cricket is played. Lockwood, who scored but 2, battled on somehow, whilst Hirst added 25 more runs, and then Lilley, just the man for such a crisis, helped to put on another 34. Victory seemed dawning when the stumper hit a half-volley hard to deep mid-off, and Darling made no mistake.

Fifteen to win and two Yorkshiremen to do it. "George" met "Wilfred" on his way to the wicket, and never, we may be sure, was the light of battle brighter in his eyes. "We'll get them by singles," he said: and get them they did, just as the long-threaten-

ing rain began to fall. To Wilfred Rhodes fell the honour of the winning hit, but it was Hirst's indomitable nerve that had carried us through the last round of the most sensational Test Match in history.

### THE "ASHES" RECOVERED.

#### *Warner's Eleven, 1903-1904*

We had now met the Australians four times within six years, and each time had had to haul down our colours. It was felt that the honour of English cricket was now seriously at stake, and very properly the M.C.C. set out to vindicate it by undertaking, for the first time in history, to send out a team under their direct auspices. Once again there were some disappointments in the inability of some of our greatest amateur batsmen to make the trip, but the bowling was strong and varied, the side particularly rich in all-round players, whilst its captain, P. F. Warner, proved not only something of a Moltke on the field, but a man whose personality and devoted leadership ensured the happiness and confidence of all his men. For a detailed narrative of the tour I can warmly recommend Warner's spirited narrative, *How we Recovered the Ashes*, a book that contains the best descriptions of cricket matches which I have ever read.

But before trying to epitomize shortly the course of the five Test games, I shall try to point out what seem to me the outstanding features of this most memorable tour as a whole. First and foremost we must note the way that Rhodes confounded the critics, who had prophesied that a bowler of his type would be innocuous in Australia. Throughout the tour he bowled magnificently; his record for the five Tests was much the finest on either side, and in the second match, at Melbourne, when he had a wicket to suit him, he was virtually unplayable. Then two men, new to international cricket, played a decisive part in two of the other four—Foster by his marvellous 287 in the first, and Bosanquet, when in the decisive game at Melbourne he established the word "googly" for ever in cricket vocabulary. Arnold, though his record reads modestly enough, played a big part with the new ball in twice sending back that terrible pair, Trumper and Duff, for negligible scores. In batting, Hayward was a tower of strength; but Tyldesley's batting at Melbourne in the second Test reached a point of genius to which only Trumper could aspire.

After somewhat startling their hosts by some brilliant cricket in their opening matches, especially by an innings victory over the redoubtable New South Wales team, England enjoyed a great triumph in the first of the Test Matches at Sydney. The wicket



AUSTRALIA, 1902

C. Hill. H. Trumble. W. P. Howell. E. Jones. Major R. J. Waddell. W. W. Armstrong. J. V. Saunders. J. J. Kelly.



was perfect when Trumper and Duff opened the innings, but in four overs they were back in the pavilion, and in the next Hill had followed them—all for 9 runs. Then came a dour and courageous recovery in which Noble batted over four hours for 133, and Armstrong two and a half for 48. Rain in the night made the wicket very troublesome next morning, and only some wonderful batting by Tyldesley tided us over the dangerous time before lunch. Then Foster and Braund played steadily, and at night we were within 42 of Australia's total of 285, with 6 wickets in hand. The next day was one long triumph. Braund got 102, and then, after an unsettling half-hour in which we lost three wickets for very little and saw our lead slipping away to insignificance, Relf and Rhodes helped Foster to add 115 and 130 for the last two wickets. Of Foster's record score of 287 much has been written. It was his first Test Match, and for a time on the second day he was not altogether happy, but on the third he gave the spectators a supreme display. More glorious off-driving and cutting has never been seen; it was orthodoxy inspired.

Australia were 292 behind, but they now developed a rear-guard action that can never be forgotten. At tea-time on the fourth day they were 207 for 3 wickets, and shortly after the resumption Hill was given run out by Crockett, a decision that evoked a most deplorable demonstration, actually originating with members in the pavilion. After some delay and still amid much disorder the game was resumed, and Trumper played most brilliantly, adding 64 to his score in the last forty minutes. Next day the innings ended for 485, with Trumper still undefeated with 185 to his credit. Lilley, a Test Match cricketer of unsurpassed experience, has rated this innings as positively the best that he ever saw; it equalled Foster's in brilliance, and even surpassed it in versatility. Rhodes's record of 40 overs for 94 runs and 5 wickets barely reflects his wonderful accuracy and persistency.

England had 194 to win, and the wicket had worn. Four wickets fell for 83 runs, and then Hirst, before he had scored, hit Howell hard and straight to Laver, a notoriously safe catch. But for once Homer nodded and Hirst and Hayward then virtually won the match between them. The Surrey batsman took four hours over his 91, but his innings was flawless, and his nerve at the crisis magnificent.

In the second game, at Melbourne, the weather settled the issue. We had one day's batting on a fast wicket, and laid the foundations of a good score by sound, but very slow, batting, and the rest of the match was played out in the intervals between heavy rainstorms on an "impossible" wicket. Tyldesley, not out 49 overnight, hit splendidly for 97 on the second afternoon, and our total topped the 300. Trumper, missed off an easy catch when 3, played a



marvellous innings of 74; but the Australians were helpless against Rhodes, and could only make 122. The pitch was now at its very worst. Trumble was making the length ball stand straight up. Tyldesley played one of the greatest innings ever seen on a sticky wicket, but, even with his 62, our total was no more than 103. The Australians had no chance whatever of making the 287 runs needed, and if we had caught even reasonably well their ultimate total of 111 might well have been halved. As a matter of fact, our catching bordered on the ludicrous, but even so, Rhodes, with eight chances missed off him, had a record for the match of 15 wickets for 124 runs, at least half of which were hit by Trumper.

Ten days later, at Adelaide, we were fairly and squarely defeated by 216 runs. Trumper, Duff, and Hill played so brilliantly at the start of the match that the score actually reached 272 before the second wicket fell, and though we did really well to get the rest of them out for little more than a hundred, our batsmen rather failed, and we were 143 behind. Then Trumper and Noble again got runs, and Gregory, after a nerve-racking start, suddenly got the pace of the wicket and hit brilliantly for 112, made in just two hours. On the fourth day we again got rid of the last half of the Australian side surprisingly cheaply, and then Warner and Hayward, with 495 to make, stayed together for nearly three hours, and 148 of the runs were obtained. Just before time, however, Hayward was out, and on the next day we were never really in the hunt. Yet, for all that our defeat was heavy, there was one compensating feature, both in the first and in the second innings. Bosanquet had struck a patch of accuracy, and it was clear that, could he but command his length, his possibilities as a match-winner on a perfect wicket were almost incalculable.

In the fortnight before the next Test Match we accounted decisively for Victoria and New South Wales. The first of these two games will always be memorable for Victoria's second innings score of 15, the lowest ever made in a big match in Australia. The Melbourne wicket was at its worst; four men were out for 0, and had Harry Trott been caught first ball, Rhodes would have done the hat-trick, and the total would not have been out of single figures. As it was he took 5 for 4 and Arnold 4 for 8. The end of the second day's play of the Fourth Test saw England with a score of 249. Australia 114 for five, both sides having had to bat on a slow but not difficult wicket. The third day was a blank, and play was not possible till after four on the Tuesday, when on a "cutting through" wicket the Australians batted badly and lost their last 5 wickets for 17 runs. With the pitch now drying rapidly we might well have had a disastrous hour, but Hayward and Foster did grandly to score 50 runs together. The next day play was again much interrupted, and we only added a hundred odd runs for our next 8 wickets;

but on the Thursday morning the wicket was firm again, and Rhodes and Warner actually put on 55 for the last wicket. The Australians now had 329 to win, and not a few of them fancied their chances. Much depended on that redoubtable pair, Trumper and Duff, and once more Arnold proved his worth with the new ball by outing them both for under 20; then just before the tea interval the captain put on Bosanquet, and from that moment the result was never in doubt. Noble and Cotter made a gallant effort for the last wicket, but all the rest were at sea to the googlies. The fielding was splendid, and the Lilley-Bosanquet combination was irresistible. The old Oxonian's figures were 6 for 51, and the margin in our favour 157 runs.

So after eight years' waiting the "Ashes" came back to England. In the last Test, which followed immediately upon the fourth, the side suffered from a very natural reaction, but the loss of the toss meant the loss of the match. This time it was our turn to experience the trials of a sticky wicket at Melbourne; Noble, Trumble and Cotter made the most of their chance, and our totals were no more than 61 and 101.

#### THE "ASHES" RETAINED.

##### *Jackson's Year.*

The success which had attended our touring team in 1903 and 1904 was consolidated in the following year, when we won the only two of the five Test Matches that were finished, and had much the best of the remaining three. Australia had to rely on Cotter's fast bowling, and the accurate leg-breaks of Armstrong, while her batting failed to realize expectations. All the old stars of the Southern Cross were here again—Trumper, Duff, Noble, Hill, Darling, and Gregory—but whereas on the last two tours the constellation had shone with consistent brilliance, its splendour was now intermittent, and in the Test Matches sadly dimmed.

English cricket this year was very strong. We had no Lockwood or Barnes, but Bosanquet won one match for us, and our bowling generally was sound and varied, whilst I question whether our batting has been stronger. There were many fine individual performances by our men, but 1905 will always rightly be known as Jackson's year. Succeeding MacLaren as captain, the great Yorkshireman could, at the end of his year of office, look back to a wonderful record. He won the toss in all five Tests (to say nothing of the two other occasions on which the unfortunate, but philosophical, Joe Darling had to guess against him); he headed the English batting and bowling averages for these matches; he made two centuries, an 82 and a 76, and alike in tactical skill and personal inspiration he proved himself a born leader.

The first Test was played at Nottingham before the end of May. On a wicket in which there was still some degree of damp, England did none too well to score only 196. Tyldesley hit finely for 56, but only a very stout partnership for the ninth wicket by Lilley and Rhodes saved us from serious failure. Cotter bowled very fast and "flew," but Laver did the real damage. In reply, Australia lost Duff at once, and then Trumper, after a beautiful beginning, strained his back and had to retire; but Noble and Hill added over 100 together, and we were slipping into "Queer Street" until Jackson went on, and in a single over got rid of both these batsmen and Darling. Even so, on the next morning Australia passed our total without further loss; but the last 5 wickets fell in forty minutes for approximately 20 runs. At their second attempt the English batsmen asserted themselves very decisively. Hayward and MacLaren made 145 before they were separated, and the latter went on to score a masterly 140. Before they were separated Australia had apparently abandoned all hope of a win, and set themselves to secure a draw, Armstrong, to that end, bowling wide of the batsmen's legs with a well-disposed field. Only Tyldesley kept up the rate of scoring by stepping away from his wicket and hitting him to the unguarded off. Next morning Jackson and Rhodes went along merrily, and half an hour before lunch Australia went in to battle out time against a deficit of 402. The wicket was perfect, and Darling and Duff plodded along steadily until after three o'clock. Then Bosanquet took charge, and in little more than half an hour credited himself with 5 wickets, one of them, Hill's, the result of a marvellous c and b from a full drive. Gregory defended desperately, and after tea, with the light becoming villainous, and rain threatening every moment, it seemed that victory might still slip from our grasp. At last Gregory was caught, after much juggling, by Arnold at mid-on, and McLeod was lbw. Victor Trumper left the dressing-room supported by two of his colleagues, in an heroic effort to reach the crease, but he could get no farther than the pavilion gate, and Australia were beaten. Bosanquet took 8 wickets, and clearly won the match; but Trumper, uninjured, might very well have saved it, and it seems very doubtful whether the light during the last half-hour was really fit for cricket. The Australians certainly did not think so.

Both the next two matches were drawn. In each England batted rather slowly in the first innings on a wicket affected by rain, gained a lead of over 100, consolidated her advantages by good batting in the second, and saw Australia saved by rain in the first, by time in the second game. At Lord's MacLaren played two fine innings of 56 and 79, Fry, by far more laborious methods, collected 73 and 36 not out. On the first day, Armstrong bowled wide on the leg side for three hours at a stretch, and on the second

Trumper and Duff hit gloriously to knock Rhodes and Haigh off their length on a sticky pitch, and scored 57 in thirty-five minutes for the first wicket; only Jackson's good bowling won us our lead.

At Leeds the English captain played a great innings of 144 not out, and Warren had a fine debut in taking 5 wickets for 57 in the first innings. Once more Armstrong neutralized our lead by bowling fifty-one overs of wide stuff to leg, and so postponing the declaration till nearly one o'clock on the last day. Tyldesley, alone of our batsmen, found an answer to his tactics by running away to leg and forcing the leg-ball through the gaps on the off-side. He scored exactly 100. The Australians had some anxious moments before finally saving the game, but Noble's patience was inexhaustible, and though Blythe, in this his first home Test Match, bowled excellently, he received poor support.

In 1902 Manchester had settled the issue. It did so again in 1905. But the luck was all with England. Batting first, under fair conditions, she made 446, Tom Hayward playing very soundly for 82, Jackson and Spooner engaging in a delightful partnership of 125, and all the later batsmen scoring well. Jackson again scored a century, and was at his very best. Rain on the Monday night rang Australia's knell. Three wickets fell at once, but Darling, who drove magnificently, made 73, and the ultimate total of 197 was really a considerable feat. The heavy roller pulled the pitch together to some extent, and Duff and Trumper made a fine start, but more rain on the following night made any real recovery almost hopeless. As a matter of fact, the Australians took the long-handle on the Wednesday morning in a desperate attempt to hit off the English bowlers, but Brearley again proved very deadly, and the end came just before lunch—and the rain which fell for the rest of the day.

The last Test Match witnessed some very brilliant batting on a perfect Oval wicket. For the first time Charles Fry showed all his powers in an international match, and his innings of 144 was virtually without fault or flaw. It was no secret that the Australians had much less respect for his batting than had home opinion, and were confident that they could cramp his style by closing the gaps on the on-side. Fry's retort was to display a mastery of the off-drive and cut, of which few had suspected him capable, and his 144 was as attractive an innings as he has ever played. Hayward and Jackson again scored well, and Rhodes added yet another to the list of useful scores which were beginning to adumbrate his future greatness as a batsman. Cotter's 7 wickets for 148 was a triumph of stamina and courage.

The Australians made a spirited reply to our total of 430, and were less than 70 behind when the innings closed. Duff's 146 was brilliant in the extreme, and Darling again hit well. On the

last morning Fry, Hayward, and MacLaren were out for but 13 runs, and England was almost in danger; but first Tyldesley and Jackson pulled the game round, and then, with all anxiety over, Tyldesley and Spooner hit most brilliantly to add 127 runs in eighty minutes. At four o'clock Jackson declared, but the Australians batted out the match without any trouble.

The last two games were something of a triumph for Walter Brearley, who took in them 14 wickets for under 20 apiece, but on fast wickets the rest of our bowling was not very convincing. That we won the rubber on our merits cannot be doubted, but it is equally certain that the Australians had the worst of the luck, and played a long way below form in some of the Test cricket. Armstrong's 303 not out against Somerset eclipsed Victor Trumper's 300 *v.* Sussex of six years before, and the same player scored a wonderful 248 not out against a strong Gentlemen's side at Lord's. Noble, for all his failure in the big games, made six hundreds, and Hill, towards the end of the year, recovered the form that had earned him the title of the greatest of all left-handed batsmen.

## TWO YEARS OF DEFEAT.

### *Our Selectors at Fault.*

The M.C.C. team that visited Australia in the winter of 1907-1908 was far from representative, but when within the first month of their tour they had run up a total of 660 for 8 against South Australia, and Barnes and Fielder had twice run through the very powerful New South Wales side for totals averaging under 100, hopes ran high for the Tests. Those hopes were disappointed, for, though in three of the games they played up to a point so well as to have much the better of the argument, each time they allowed the game to slip from their fingers in face of the indomitable fight put up by Australia; in the end the tally against them was four games to one. About the first two Tests, at least, there was no lack of excitement. At Sydney, Australia, set 274 to get in the last innings, had lost half their wickets for 95 runs, but thereafter there was not a single failure, and Cotter and Hazlitt hit off the last 56 runs for the ninth wicket in forty minutes. At Melbourne it was our turn to provide the sensation in the form of a partnership by Barnes and Fielder that added 39 runs and landed us past the post, winners by a single wicket. The other three games were all lost. In the fourth we were most unlucky, for, after bowling the enemy out on a perfect wicket for 214, rain ruined our chances. But in both the third and the fifth we established a good lead on the first innings, only to be outplayed in the second, Hill and Trumper being at their very best in efforts of over 180 each.

It is not difficult to put one's finger on the causes of our failure. On paper our bowling looked well enough, but Braund, Rhodes, and Blythe proved entirely negligible in the Test Matches, and the whole brunt of the attack fell upon Barnes, Fielder, and Crawford. The latter, who was not twenty-one until the second month of the tour, actually took more wickets in the Tests than any of his fellows, and proved himself a magnificent tryer, able to turn the ball even on the most perfect of Australian wickets. Fielder, too, stuck splendidly to his work, but Barnes was unquestionably the great bowler of the tour. He bowled rather slower than in England, and his length and finger-spin more than fulfilled the estimate formed of him on his previous tour. These three men did more than well, but lack of support inevitably nullified most of their efforts.

The batting of the side admittedly lacked the distinction of the highest class, and some of the men who left England with the best records signally failed to maintain their form. But the tour did introduce to international cricket two great batsmen. George Gunn had gone to Australia independently to improve his health, but with the understanding that he should be available to play for the M.C.C. if required. When Arthur Jones, the English captain, fell seriously ill before the first Test, Gunn was brought into the side and scored 119 and 74 in a style so secure and masterly that it reminded the older Australians of Arthur Shrewsbury. Subsequent scores of 65, 43, and 122 in the later Test Matches proved that the first success was symptomatic. In natural gifts, in patience and in beautiful method, Gunn has always been essentially of the Test Match class.

Gunn's inclusion at Sydney was only made possible by leaving out Hobbs, a decision which at the time was a bitter disappointment to the young Surrey batsman; but his chance soon came, and in the second Test he made 83 in his first innings for England against Australia. From that start he never looked back, and when he left Australia it was with the reputation of being the great professional batsman of the near future. Humphries of Derbyshire kept wicket magnificently.

For her success Australia was principally indebted to the collective strength of her batting, and the now proverbial ability to fight when her back was to the wall. Saunders was by far her most successful bowler. One other point is interesting: the rate of scoring in the five Test Matches averaged no more than 43 runs per hour, perhaps the first unmistakable evidence of the logical implication of matches without time-limit.

Though Australia had beaten us by four games to one, it was felt that the margin of difference between the sides was not such as to suggest that they were likely to hold our full strength at

home, especially on rain-affected wickets. By the end of May 1909 this estimate seemed justified. Noble's team had by then lost three matches, and the margin against them in the first Test Match had been 10 wickets. Here they had had rather the best of the wicket, but their batting had cut up badly before Hirst and Blythe, and when England in the last innings wanted 105 to win, Fry and Jack Hobbs, who had both made 0 in the first innings, went in first and knocked off the runs without being parted. In this his first home Test Match Hobbs played a brilliant innings. But this was the end of the Australian misfortunes, for from that moment they never looked back, winning the next two Tests outright, and having considerably the best of the argument at both Manchester and the Oval, where the last two ended in draws. Indeed, they were not again defeated until at the very end of the tour, by Lord Londesborough's Eleven, at Scarborough. For all this success no one will rate this Australian Eleven as high as some of its predecessors; the fielding was magnificent and Noble's captaincy a great asset, but apart from the admirable all-round cricket of Armstrong and the batting of the two left-handers, Bardsley and Ransford, worthy successors to Clem Hill and Joe Darling, there seemed rather a lack of real distinction about the team. The truth is, I think, that English cricket had sensibly declined from its high-water mark in the period 1902-1905, and that of our reduced resources the best use was certainly not made. At the end of the season the selectors came in for some hard words. Possibly things were not easy for them, but the fact that no fewer than twenty-five were played for England during the season is perhaps not the best advertisement for their methods.

The course of the Birmingham match had aroused no anxiety, but the selectors were not content to leave well alone at Lord's. They made five changes from the side that had won, and, worst of all, sent England into the field without a fast bowler. After we had spent all Monday in laboriously making 269, Australia, on an easier and faster wicket, made 350. Ransford, like Harry Graham and Victor Trumper before him, had the delight of making a century (143) in his first Test Match at Lord's, but our fielding was sadly at fault. An easy draw seemed indicated, but on the Wednesday our batting broke down in a humiliating way before the bowling of Armstrong, whose figures came out at 24 overs for 35 runs and 6 wickets, and Australia won in a canter.

The English side for Leeds read more convincingly, for Rhodes and Barnes meant a big reinforcement to the attack. For two days there was a tremendous struggle. England should have led Australia's total of 188 comfortably, but after Sharp and Tyldesley had reached 130 for 2, Macartney brought about a collapse, and we were actually 6 runs down on the first innings. Then it

was Australia's turn for a bad time, at the hands of Barnes, and when they had lost 7 wickets for 127 the odds were on us. But Macartney stone-walled, Cotter and Carter hit, and in the end we needed 214 to win. It was a proposition, but perfectly possible; as a matter of fact, we made 87, and, after Hobbs left, never looked like making very many more. It was a sorry business, but Cotter and Macartney bowled very well, and in the whole match the little left-hander had the splendid record of 11 wickets for 85.

When, after the draw at Manchester, Noble (for the fifth consecutive time) won the toss and the English team took the field at the Oval it was found, to the amazement of every experienced judge, that they did not include a recognized fast bowler. Buckenham, among the thirteen originally selected, being omitted, though the wicket was hard and fast. This decision of the selectors, to quote the verdict of so dispassionate a judge as the editor of *Wisden*, "touched the confines of lunacy," and bitterly must they have repented it before the match was over.

For the first time in the Test Match cricket of the year the bat was master of the ball throughout. True, Australia started badly to some admirable googly bowling by D. W. Carr, and lost 4 wickets for 58; but Trumper and Bardsley then played magnificently. Carr was bowled unchanged for an hour and a half, a suicidal policy with such a bowler, and with Macartney again making 50, the total reached 325. To this we made a creditable reply; Rhodes and Fry each made over 60, and Jack Sharp, with whom, presumably, the rôle of fast bowler was to lie, though his total bag for the season was but 26 wickets, did his duty nobly with the bat to the tune of 105.

On the last day the Australians completely mastered our bowling, Bardsley and Gregory putting on 180 for the first wicket, and the former going on to complete his second hundred in the match, an Australian Test record still unique at home. Noble took no risks with his declaration, and the rubber was Australia's. Of all the men new to England, none made quite so big an impression as Bardsley, with how much justification history has since amply proved. More orthodox in method than many of Australia's greatest batsmen, his was always a terribly difficult wicket to get, so accurate his footwork, so beautifully straight his bat, whether in back or forward play. But Bardsley was also full of strokes, a beautiful cutter, and wonderfully skilful at forcing and "running" the ball to leg; above all, he had the temperament for playing long innings in big cricket. Ransford, too, had a wonderful first season in England, and his fielding in the country has never been surpassed.



## ENGLAND'S GREATEST TRIUMPH, 1911-1912.

England had now won but two Test Matches out of the last ten, and the prospects of the team which left in September 1911 to recover the "Ashes" were eagerly canvassed. With the calamities of 1909 fresh in their minds, the M.C.C. selectors set about their work with the greatest care, and the result was a team better balanced and better equipped at all points than any which had left our shores. Originally Charles Fry was to have captained the eleven, and it has always been a matter of regretful conjecture what he might not have done in Australia had he ever settled down to the business of run-getting; but in the end he had to refuse, and the captaincy was very properly offered to Warner, who, alone in the last seventeen years, had led an English team to victory in Australia. The side was a happy combination of experience and youth, and in the successful issue both factors played a decisive part.

The tour opened disastrously for England, for after scoring 151 in his first innings, Warner fell ill, and it was soon certain that he could not hope to put his pads on again in Australia. Remembering what his leadership had meant to us in 1903-1904, we can realize what dismay the news caused, and it says wonders for the spirit of the English team that they defied even this stroke of fate. Warner appointed Douglas in his place; there is no harm in saying now that for some weeks, indeed, until after the first Test Match, Douglas was not altogether successful in his captaincy in the field; but, helped by many a conference in Warner's sickroom, and sustained all the time by his own indomitable pertinacity, he steadily improved his tactics and played a captain's part and more with the ball in the final innings of the decisive Test Match.

The Australians this year were captained by Clem Hill. They were very strong in batting, for, though the captain and Victor Trumper were now past their absolute best, the new generation had definitely "arrived" in the persons of Bardsley, Armstrong, Ransford, and Minnett; while the tail, as usual, could be relied upon to wag. In bowling it was another story. Cotter had lost his extra yard of pace; Whitty, whose left-hand swingers had a big reputation, proved perfectly innocuous, and there was no "flighty" spin-bowler of the Laver or Noble type; in fact, the Australian attack depended on one man, H. V. Hordern. Hordern had already visited England in 1907 and 1908 as a member of the Pennsylvania University and Philadelphia teams that had toured our public schools; he had then met with great success and had by this time developed into a googly bowler of extreme accuracy and difficult flight, the one real danger to our batsmen.

In fact, the destiny of the "Ashes" turned largely upon the

question whether our batsmen could master Hordern. From the rest of the bowling they certainly had little to fear.

In the first Test Match Hordern mastered us, and his 12 wickets for 175 decided the issue. The second Test at Melbourne was a great struggle. Its opening was sensational in the extreme, six Australian wickets falling for 38 runs on a perfect pitch. At this point Barnes's analysis read 11 overs, 7 maidens, 6 runs, 5 wickets, and everyone who saw his effort was convinced that finer bowling on a plumb wicket had never been seen. Length, a very late swing accentuated by a definite leg-break which nipped from the pitch, made up a very awkward proposition. The Australian tail fought hard and brought the total to 184. At tea-time on the second day our position seemed very strong. Rhodes and Hearne (114) had batted grandly, and we had 211 for 3 on the board. And then the last 7 wickets fell for 50 odd runs, four of them to Hordern, but largely by bad batting; and what should have been a lead of 200 had shrunk to a paltry 80. In face of some more splendid bowling by Barnes and Foster and fine fielding, Australia lost 4 wickets for 38; in the end we had to get 219. Hobbs and Rhodes made 50 of them before luncheon, and then Hobbs and Gunn went steadily along to 169, with Hearne to follow, and see Hobbs complete his 100 and win the match. Hobbs was at his very best, especially in his square and late-cutting, and his mastery over Hordern was a great example and encouragement to his comrades. The features of the match, however, were the polished and imperturbable century by "Young Jack," then a few weeks short of his twenty-first birthday, the deadly bowling of Barnes and Foster, and the double failure of those three great batsmen, Hill, Trumper, and Bardsley.

At Melbourne Barnes had taken charge; at Adelaide it was Foster. Once again Hill won the toss; once again the wicket was perfect, and yet soon after half-past four Australia were all out for 133. Foster, with only three men on the off-side, kept a perfect length at the middle and leg stumps, and came off the pitch at such a tremendous pace that the Australians were all at sea to him. They simply could not move their feet quick enough to get into the right position, and were constantly being hit very hard and painfully on the legs, whilst every now and again Foster made one straighten back to hit the stumps. On the second day we drove our advantage well home by scoring 327 for 4 wickets, of which Hobbs was responsible for 187. Up till well past the century he made no mistake of any kind, and showed as complete a mastery over the bowling as at Melbourne a fortnight before. Later Foster drove in the most exhilarating way for 71, and with almost every man on the side getting runs, the total reached 501. Our position was almost impregnable; but Australia by no means went down without a fight. Hill played one of his finest innings, and it was a disap-

pointment to everyone when he was caught at mid-on when two short of his hundred. It is remarkable that, apart from his four centuries in Test cricket, Hill has four times scored between 95 and 99 in these games. A total of 476 in such circumstances spoke volumes for Australian pluck; but it was not enough, and we knocked off the 100 odd runs needed quite comfortably for 3 wickets.

Interest in the fourth Test was positively intense throughout Australia, for it was realized that for only the second time in seventeen years their cricket heroes were fairly "up against it" on their own wickets. At last England won the toss, which gave Douglas the chance of sending Australia in to bat on a pitch with some wet in it. For the third time running our great pair of bowlers rose to the occasion, and Australia were outed for 191. By the time we went in the sun and the roller had done their work, and Hobbs and Rhodes scored 54 together by perfect cricket.

Next morning, before an enormous crowd, by perfect cricket and wonderful running between the wickets, they broke all records by raising the score to 323, before Hobbs was caught at the wicket on the leg-side. It was only fitting that another record should go by the board, our total passing by three the 586 put up by Australia against Stoddart's team. The wicket on the fourth day was as good as ever; but the generally expected rear-guard action by Australia never developed. Our heavy artillery, Douglas, Barnes, and Foster, found the range at once; the retreat became a rout, and England left the field winners by an innings and 225 runs. Fittingly enough, it was the captain, Douglas, who led the assault in the last stages of the action. Bowling with tremendous determination and life, he came out with the fine figures of 5 for 46.

The rubber was ours; but just to leave no lingering shadow of doubt about our superiority, we went on to win the last Test Match as well, and thus establish another record for an English side in Australia by winning four such games off the reel. This time our batting was not quite so impressive; but Woolley played a glorious knock of 133 not out, and once again our bowlers dismissed Australia for a first innings total of under 200. In the end we left them 363 to win, and, with 209 up before the fourth wicket fell, Australia might perhaps have got home; but then a thunderstorm and hot sun produced a "jumping" wicket, and Foster made no mistake about using his opportunity, the last 7 wickets falling for 83 runs.

The tour was a great triumph for English cricket at a time when its reputation in Australia was on the downward grade. The mainspring of our success was unquestionably the bowling of Barnes, Foster, and Douglas, and it is doubtful whether finer bowling on plumb wickets has ever been seen. All kept a superb length, but it was their pace off the pitch that really won the Test Matches. Foster's bowling was a new phenomenon to the Australians; whilst

Barnes, with his record of 34 wickets in Test Matches for 22 apiece, was acclaimed the greatest bowler we had ever sent against them. The fielding was very good. Smith kept wicket superbly, especially to Foster, his own county captain; Hobbs ran out fifteen men during the tour, and Woolley caught six men, two of them most brilliantly, in the last Test. Our fine attack was splendidly supported by our batsmen. The performances of Hobbs and Rhodes as an opening pair were phenomenal, and in making 126 not out, 187 and 178 in successive Tests, Hobbs then first joined the ranks of the unquestionable immortals.

But even our fine work in the field might not have availed without the comradeship that made the eleven into a team, the devotion to the game that made all minor distractions of no account, and the determination that sent them on to the field determined on victory and confident of their ability to achieve it.

#### THE TRIANGULAR TOURNAMENT, 1912.

In the summer following our triumphant tour in Australia there was staged in England the first, and possibly the last, Triangular Tournament. When it was all over, it is probable that not even Sir Abe Bailey, who had conceived the scheme, can have claimed for it a great measure of success. Very possibly it was too ambitious a project, and, even under the most favourable conditions, there was not room for nine Test Matches in our crowded domestic programme; but a variety of circumstances combined to operate against it from the start. Into the depressing story of the feud which split Australian cricket from top to bottom in the winter of 1911-1912, I am not tempted to enter here; those who want to read its details must seek them in a chapter devoted to the subject in Warner's record of the tour. Suffice it to say that the cricket atmosphere in Australia was at this time vitiated by vindictiveness, jealousy, and mutual mistrust; in the end the Board of Control had their way, and when their selected side set sail for England, Trumper, Hill, Cotter, Armstrong, and Ransford remained at home. The absence of these great players at a time when Australia needed all her strength to counteract her heavy defeats of the past winter naturally detracted from public interest in them over here, though they proved themselves a very useful side, and altogether too good for one of their two rivals.

The weakness of the South Africans, exhibited beyond all miscalculation in the first two matches of the series, both of which they lost by an innings, further disillusioned the public as to the nature of the Triangular Test. In bowling they fell far below the high standard of their 1907 team, whilst in batting, Faulkner, their one really great performer, after a brilliant century in the first Test

with Australia, failed completely in the remaining five. Badly beaten in two of these contests with Australia, they were annihilated by England; only once did they reach a total of 200, and only one of their batsmen, Llewellyn (the old Hampshire player), reached 50 against us. Finally, the weather throughout the season was deplorable, and the majority of the Test Matches were either spoilt by rain or played out on such wickets as to load the dice against our visitors.

England had, this year, a fine eleven. They beat South Africa with consummate ease in all three matches, and though the first two fixtures with Australia were ruined by rain, they made no mistake about the final match at the Oval in August. Against the South Africans Spooner batted in splendid form, scoring 119 at Lord's and 82 at Leeds, but it was our bowling that annihilated them. Foster and Barnes, in the first match, recalled their winter's triumphs by taking 19 out of the 20 wickets that fell, but in the remaining two Foster was quite eclipsed, and, with captures of 10 at Leeds and 13 at the Oval, Barnes completely took charge of the game. His total record against the unfortunate Africans in the three Tests was 34 wickets for 282 runs.

When England met Australia at Lords towards the end of June, the latter had already had to haul down their colours to Notts, Lancs, and Surrey; but it was felt that their bowling was capable of a big performance, while Bardsley and Macartney had done some wonderful things, notably a partnership of 362 in three hours against Essex. Unfortunately, rain ruined the match. England won the toss, and on a slow, though not really difficult, wicket, Hobbs and Rhodes repeated their recent successes by scoring 112 for the opening partnership; Hobbs went on to score 107, hitting very brilliantly when rain had eased the pitch, and at the end of play our score was 211 for 4. The second day was virtually a blank, and interest in the final stages was purely academic.

The second match, at Manchester, was a fiasco, less than six hours' play being possible in the three days. England scored 203, to which Rhodes contributed 92, no one else 20, and Australia replied with 14 runs for no wicket. With the rubber thus still in suspense, the last Test, at the Oval, was to be played out. In fact, it occupied four days, on every one of which rain curtailed the hours of play. Fry won the toss, and once again Hobbs and Rhodes gave us a grand start, on a troublesome wicket, by scoring 107 together in under two hours; Hobbs's 66 was a beautiful innings, remarkable for the certainty of his hooking. Later Woolley hit finely for 62, and our total of 245 was eminently satisfactory. Australia lost Gregory and Macartney at once, but Kelleway and Bardsley batted away, and with 90 up without further loss they were on terms. Then Bardsley was bowled by a ball from Barnes

which he made no attempt to play, and from that moment disasters followed fast. The wicket was now really sticky, Barnes and Woolley were almost unplayable, and with the last seven batsmen dismissed for a beggarly 21, the total reached only 111. England had a commanding lead, and Hobbs again hit well; but before stumps were drawn 4 wickets had fallen for 64 runs, and only Fry's superb defence had prevented further trouble. On the last morning, Fry, with invaluable help from Douglas, battled on, and his innings of 79 was, under the circumstances, a masterpiece of resource and self-restraint.

Australia wanted 310 to win, an impossible task. Macartney played wonderful cricket for half an hour, but was then clean bowled by Dean, and at the same total Bardsley was thrown out from cover by Hobbs; after that the end came quickly, no one else could look at Dean and Woolley, and the side were all out for 65. Woolley, with his fine 62 in the first innings and 10 wickets for 49, had the lion's share in the victory.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE COUNTIES: 1900-1914

#### SURREY.

OF the general principle that bowling wins more matches than batting, the fortunes of Surrey in the present century furnish clear evidence. But their batting was wonderfully strong, and in Hayward and Hobbs they had one of the great opening pairs of all cricket history. The foundation of Hayward's batting was back-play, with his legs often serving as a second line of defence, yet never hampering the fluent sweep of his stroke, for there was never anything of the modern jab about it. As a corollary to this defence, he was a complete master of the art of forcing the ball wide of mid-on for runs, and withal a classic driver, especially on the off-side, with a love for hitting skimmers over extra cover's head, and a power that enabled him at will to play the innings almost of an undiluted hitter. But the keynote of his cricket was his complete imperturbability. He holds the record for a season's total, 3,518 in 1906. Perhaps his greatest achievement was to score a double century twice within a week. This was in 1906, and his scores were 144 not out and 100 against Notts, 143 and 125 against Leicester.

It was in 1905 that Hobbs played his first match for Surrey, fittingly enough against a Gentlemen of England Eleven captained by W. G. That was on Easter Monday, as I remember well, for I watched the match, and it was bitterly cold. A fortnight later, in his first county game, against Essex, he scored 155, and was given his county cap. From that start he never really looked back. Two years later he played against the Gentlemen at Lord's, and in the autumn of the same year was picked to go out to Australia for the first time with A. O. Jones's M.C.C. Eleven. An attempt will be made in another place to discuss the genius of Hobbs's art. But the mere statistics of his achievements for Surrey are almost unbelievable. Forty-three thousand runs and a hundred and thirty-nine centuries speak for themselves, but perhaps even more impressive is the figure of eighteen partnerships of over two hundred for the first wicket for his county. For ten years Hobbs and Hayward opened the Surrey innings. To support them there were several

batsmen of a high order, such as Hayes, a most dashing and withal consistent player, who year after year totalled some 1,800 runs in the season, and those three very remarkable hitters, the brothers V. F. S. and J. N. Crawford, and the Australian professional, Alan Marshal, all of whom unfortunately played only a year or two for the county.

It was weakness in bowling that really prevented Surrey from getting to the top of the tree. The year 1903 had seen virtually the last of Lockwood and Richardson. In point of pace and "unpleasantness" N. A. Knox was a worthy successor, but his legs could not stand the adamant wickets at the Oval, and after two years of brilliant success, another season saw him drop out. Walter Lees did splendid work for many summers, and with his beautiful run up and elastic action was always a joy to watch. Rushby, who really "arrived" just before Lees, was another quick medium bowler with a beautiful action, quite deadly on some wickets, but rather lacking in stamina and determination in fine weather.

The one crying need was for a left-hand spin bowler of real class, but the need was not then, and has never yet been satisfied, one of the most curious features in the county's history. However, a substitute for such a bowler was found in the person of "Razor" Smith, who in the wet season of 1910 outstripped all rivals in England. On the slow side of medium, he had a difficult flight, great accuracy of length, and astonishing powers of spin. It was most unfortunate for Surrey that in 1910, when Smith was carrying all before him, there was no one capable of giving him first-class support at the other end. Rushby had been seduced away by the Lancashire League, a lamentable quarrel had alienated J. N. Crawford, and so the Championship which should have been theirs eluded them, and they were forced to be content with second place to Kent.

Four years were to pass before the blue riband was to return to the Oval, for the first time since 1899, and under somewhat curious circumstances. The two matches which virtually decided the issue were the home fixtures with Kent and Yorkshire in August. At the time they fell due the Oval was in the hands of the Military Authorities, the games were transferred to Lord's, whilst the two last county fixtures were incontinently and very properly scratched. Nevertheless no one grudged Surrey their success, for they were a fine all-round side. The advent of P. G. H. Fender, who this year abandoned Sussex for the county of his birth, lent a much-needed variety in attack to help Rushby and Hitch, the latter of whom was by now about the most successful fast bowler in England. The batting was strong. That splendid athlete, Ducat, now provided just the reinforcement needed in the body of the side; Donald



Knight, that year a freshman at Oxford, played in a style that made all things seem possible for him; and Hayes was still a power in the land. But, appropriately enough, it was Hayward and Hobbs who settled the issue. Hobbs was in marvellous form that summer, and Tom Hayward, though now showing signs of advancing years, finished up the season—and, as it turned out, his first-class career—in a blaze of glory, batting with consummate mastery against both Kent and Yorkshire.

#### MIDDLESEX.

When reinforced by their August contingent of schoolmasters, the batting of Middlesex was always strong, but the greatest attacking force in the side undoubtedly lay in the person of Albert Trott. After his remarkable success against Stoddart's 1894-1895 Australian side, it is difficult to understand why Trott was not included in the Colonial team that visited us in 1896; and it was possibly out of resentment at his omission that he came over that year, joined the ground staff at Lord's, and two years later became a regular member of the Middlesex Eleven. From his second season with the county until 1904 he was one of the outstanding match-winners playing; in 1899, and again in 1900, he brought off the astonishing double of taking over 200 wickets and scoring 1,000 runs, a record shared only by Hirst, Kennedy, and Maurice Tate twice. Afterwards his batting somewhat fell away, thanks to his ruling passion for trying to emulate on every ground his feat of "carrying" Lord's pavilion with a straight drive. But as a fielder at second slip he remained superb, and as a bowler he presented an almost unique combination of resource and individuality, with his extraordinary variation of pace, his command of either break, and his deadly swinging yorker; moreover, he was a magnificent field to his own bowling. In his "benefit" against Somerset in 1907 he performed a double hat-trick! By the time Trott dropped out of the side in 1910, two wonderful reinforcements had been discovered in the younger Hearne and Frank Tarrant, while the retirements of Francis Ford and Stoddart had been fully compensated by the appearance of P. F. Warner and B. J. T. Bosanquet.

As *Wisden* said in the special article that marked his retirement from the game: "There have been greater cricketers than Pelham Warner, but none more devoted to the game"; and unflagging enthusiasm and determination have surely been the keynotes of his success both as batsman and captain. His rise was not meteoric, nor his ascendancy ever pre-eminent; his method was not spectacular, nor his performances in representative cricket really sensational. Yet, when all this is said, no one can fairly deny to him the title of "great." On every sort of wicket, against every sort of

bowling, he would be found scoring heavily, but nowhere quite so consistently as on his home wicket at Lord's. Far from robust or muscular in frame, he was blessed with that great cricketing gift, a rare physical co-ordination, and his batting, if not graceful in the ordinary sense of that term, was extremely attractive in its balance, neatness, and precision. With strokes all round the wicket, he was especially strong on the on-side, and to bowl straight off-breaks to him was a highly expensive waste of time. On sticky wickets his back-play was soundness itself, and he was always on the look-out for the quick-footed drive; on fast wickets he was a beautiful cutter, and, indeed, an off-side player on classic lines.

But, quite apart from his technical proficiency, he was great in temperament, in the fighting spirit that welcomed a crisis, in the optimism that could carry both himself and his men through the dark days, and in his profound knowledge of the game. It was these qualities that made him a great captain, not merely of his county, which he led from 1908 until the never-to-be-forgotten close of his career in its year of Championship, 1920, but also of the Gentlemen at Lord's, of touring sides innumerable in all quarters of the globe, and, above all, of the England Eleven which recovered the "Ashes" in the memorable matches of the winter 1903-1904. Among the figures that challenge oblivion in the long vistas of the game—W. G., with his black beard and M.C.C. cap, Ranji, in his fluttering sleeves of silk—few surely were more familiar, none certainly was better loved, than that of "Plum" Warner, the "Happy Warrior," in his Harlequin cap.

The name of Bosanquet will always be associated with the googly, for, though it had been bowled inadvertently before, by Walter Mead amongst others, it was he who first mastered both its theory and practice. Originally a fastish medium bowler, he found that on the highly artificial wickets of the beginning of the century there was little encouragement or prospect of success, and before he left Oxford in 1900 he had begun experimenting with leg-breaks and his new discovery of the "leg-break reversed." This he had evolved in the playing of "Twisty-Grab," that game played over a table in the pavilion by rain-bound cricketers to beguile the time. He had practised it at stump-cricket and "with long-suffering friends" at the nets, and finally, in 1901, he ventured to bowl it in matches. In the winter of the following year he went with Lord Hawke's team to New Zealand, and so impressed Charles Bannerman with his possibilities that he said the next team to Australia could not be complete without him. On the way home the eleven played the Australian States, and, turning out against N.S.W., Bosanquet clean-bowled Victor Trumper with a googly, the first ball he delivered in Australia—surely an augury borne out by subsequent events. In 1904 he was just about the best all-round amateur playing, but

after one most sensational performance in the first Test Match of 1905 he practically dropped out of the game. He was one of the great originators, and the development of his discovery by his successors in the next ten years exercised a profound influence on the tactics of the game.

As a batsman, too, he was an original. With his very short back-lift, his style was rough and unattractive; but few men could drive or hook harder, thanks to the great strength of his forearms and wrists. On difficult pitches he was particularly dangerous.

It was in 1905 that Frank Tarrant first appeared for Middlesex, having, like his fellow Australian, Trott, before him, passed through his qualifying period on the ground staff of M.C.C. In two years' time he had jumped right into the front rank, and it is no exaggeration to say that over the whole period of years from then until the outbreak of war he could be fairly bracketed with George Hirst as the finest all-round cricketer in the world. Year after year he would average some 1,600 runs and 140 wickets, whilst in 1911 he actually exceeded 2,000 runs. Originally his batting was strongly defensive, but he was always a beautiful cutter, and he soon developed scoring strokes in every direction, especially on the on-side. He could play either game, defensive or aggressive, at will, and about all his batting there was a note of certainty and assurance that stamped him as belonging to the very top class. A left-hand bowler, a shade faster than slow, he could be as deadly as anyone on a wicket that helped him, but he lacked the supreme accuracy of the greatest of his kind.

"Young Jack" Hearne, as he was always called by the generation that knew and respected his older namesake, was a ground-boy at Lord's when fifteen years old, appeared for Middlesex at eighteen, and before he was twenty-one had been selected for the England team that visited Australia in 1911-1912, and had made a century in a Test Match. For the next quarter of a century his wonderful defence and imperturbable temperament meant almost as much to his county as the more lively genius of Hendren. At his best he displayed very clearly the hall-mark of class—the ability to play his every stroke with perfect balance and in slow time. No man ever presented a bat more full or more perfectly straight. Too often he seemed to refuse to express his genius in anything but imperturbable defence. The strokes were there, however, when he chose to use them. He was a master of on-side play, and a safe and attractive cutter, and if he seldom drove he had an extraordinary gift for forcing the ball square off his back foot to the off boundary.

Though his future in batting was always secure, his first really sensational performance was with the ball, when in 1910, against Essex at Lord's, he took 7 wickets in 5 overs and a ball for 2 runs. From that moment it was clear that another googly bowler of

immense possibilities had appeared, and though his form in this respect was always rather in-and-out, many good judges consider him at his best positively the most difficult bowler of his type that the game has yet seen. His pace was almost medium in the air, his quick, almost rotary, action made him difficult to sight early, and on pitching his leg-break would nip across the wicket as if it was alive. His physique was never strong, and he had to take care of himself and husband his resources, but he had stamina enough in him to effect the great double of 100 wickets and 2,000 runs in three separate seasons.

Hendren's rise to supremacy was subsequent to the war, but in his six seasons for the county before the break he scored well, and, though his defence was not sound, the power and enterprise of his attack was unmistakable, whilst his fielding was then, as it has been ever since, a perpetual inspiration.

Under "Plum" Warner Middlesex were pre-eminently a happy side; they enjoyed their cricket and were enjoyable to watch. In 1914 they all but won the Championship, and in Tarrant and J. W. Hearne they had, on the form of that year, two of the greatest all-round cricketers who have ever appeared together in the same county side.

#### YORKSHIRE.

For the first decade of the century Yorkshire's barometer seemed to stand permanently at "set fair." The county was never lower than third, and in 1905, and again in 1908, led the field. In the latter year they were undefeated in all the thirty-three matches in which they engaged, but their success in 1905 was perhaps even more remarkable. In that year five of the side—Jackson, Hirst, Rhodes, Haigh, and Denton—were at one time or another given a place in the England teams against the Australians, and so, by accepting whole-heartedly the admirable principle of country before county, Yorkshire took the field on several occasions with, on paper, but a shadow of her full strength. Still, they pulled through, though the very last match, at Leyton, almost cost them the Championship. For once their bowling was fairly collared, and Essex ran up a huge total. Then Johnny Douglas shot them out for 96—his first great performance as a bowler—and the third day saw the White Rose with their backs very close to the wall. George Hirst stayed five mortal hours for 90 runs, but when that fine hitter, Ernest Smith, came in No. 8, there was still an hour to go. For that hour he held the fort, and when stumps were pulled up his score was still 0, but the Championship was won!

The next two years brought a serious set-back. The young players went back, rather than forward, and the county sank to

eighth place in the list. In 1911, however, though the end of the season found them but one place higher, there were signs that the threatening storm had been weathered. A first-rate successor to Hunter had been discovered in Dolphin, and two new players of exceptional promise in Booth and Drake had now firmly established themselves in the side. B. B. Wilson had also made good, and with Roy Kilner and Oldroyd beginning to find their feet, the Committee's object was well within sight—the building up of a new generation before the old one was a spent force. Under Sir Archibald White Yorkshire won the Championship in 1912, and were only second to Kent in the following summer.

Excellently, however, as the new hands had acquitted themselves, the chief glory of their county's wonderful record over the period under review must lie with the "old brigade," and pre-eminently with George Hirst.

Those who wish to study in detail the statistics of the great Yorkshireman's career must seek them in the elaborate summary compiled for *Wisden* of 1922 by R. O. Edwards. Suffice it here to point out that his combined record for runs and wickets is surpassed by W. G. and Wilfrid Rhodes alone. In fourteen seasons he achieved the double of 1,000 runs and 100 wickets, whilst in 1906 he achieved the still unequalled feat of making 2,385 runs and taking 208 wickets.

In temperament and method alike, both with bat and ball, Hirst was a match-winner. It was in 1901 that he first learnt to swerve, and that by chance when practising in the spring at Leeds. For the next ten years it is hard to estimate how much his fellow-bowlers and his county owed to the practice he developed of bowling out the opening batsmen of the opposition almost before they had reached the crease. At its best, his swerve was so abrupt that one of his victims described its final course as "like a very good throw in from cover-point." If the batsman did succeed in getting his bat to it, there was the army of expectant "silly" legs to prove his alternative undoing. About all his bowling there was a resiliency, vigour, and optimism which from the very outset claimed from the batsman the moral supremacy; and with all his pace and peculiarity of flight, his length was singularly accurate. As a batsman, too, he was essentially an individualist. At need he could defend with the utmost stubbornness and self-restraint, but for choice he would play a game of enterprise, in which hooking and pulling played a preponderating part, though he could off-drive as hard as most men. Sixty centuries and the record score by a Yorkshireman—341—stand to his name. He was a magnificent and utterly fearless mid-off and a dead sure catch, as a total of 601 catches in his first-class career effectively suggests; but, above all, he was a cricketer of the sunniest nature, and an unquenchable

courage, whose whole heart was in the game, and whose very glance bespoke straight dealing and a generous spirit.

Wilfrid Rhodes, with a life total of 4,184 wickets, occupies a solitary and splendid niche in the temple of fame. Whether even at his best as a bowler he ever possessed quite the art of Peate or Colin Blythe is still, and will ever be, a matter of controversy; but no bowler in history has ever remained so successful for so long, and that, too, when developing as a batsman from No. 11 for his county into No. 1 for England. On sticky wickets his break-away was so abrupt as to make him virtually unplayable, but he probably owed quite as much to his mastery of flight and his power of drawing the batsmen out to destruction, very often in the shape of "stumped Hunter, Dolphin, and Wood." Though naturally preferring a rain-affected pitch, he was invariably steady and often successful on hard wickets, and his first tour in Australia altogether confounded the critics, who had prophesied that on the "shirt-front" pitches of Sydney and Melbourne his opponents would knock the cover off the ball.

As a batsman, Rhodes from the start showed unmistakable possibilities, but with so much depending upon his bowling, the county authorities were not disposed to encourage particularly this side of his game. But when in that most dramatic of Test Matches, at the Oval in 1902, he helped George Hirst in the indomitable last-wicket stand that landed victory home, it was recognized that as a batsman he could no longer be denied. In the next year he totalled over 1,000 runs, and continued so to do without a break until 1926. His batting steadily improved until in the 1911-1912 Australian trip he became for Hobbs an ideal opening partner, and ended the tour with the highest aggregate of runs on the side. Originally an orthodox player, Rhodes after the War had become perhaps the leading exponent of the two-eyed stance, which, in fact, approximated to "French Cricket." But increasing ring-craft offset the years, and the more difficult the situation the more belligerent his personality.

The last of the triumvirate, Schofield Haigh, never attained quite the distinction of the other two; but, nevertheless, he played a very large part in his county's triumphs, for in ten seasons he headed the county bowling averages in all matches. On fast, true wickets he was not, perhaps, particularly formidable, but when the pitch gave him real help he could be as deadly as any right-hander in history. To astonishing power of finger-spin he learnt to add great control and variety of flight; his fast ball was really fast, his "yorkers" equally deceptive. He was an enterprising, exhilarating batsman, good enough to score his 1,000 runs in at least one season, and a fine catch anywhere. But apart from all technical skill, he was a man with a heart of gold: to know him

was to respect and to love him. As "Old Ebor" has splendidly said, he was for eighteen years "the sunshine of the Yorkshire Eleven."

#### KENT.

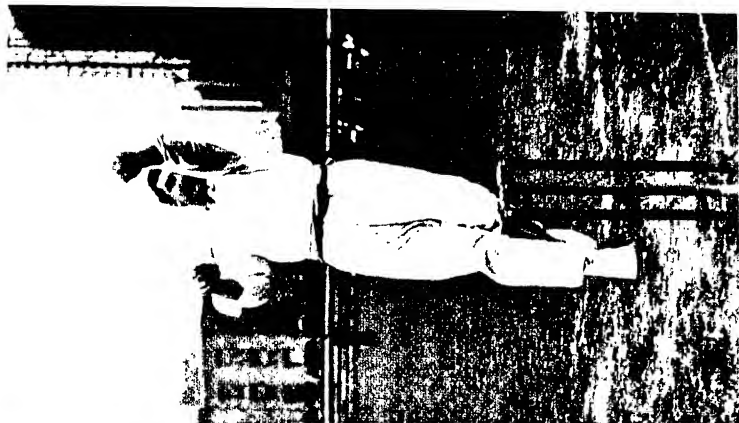
Remarkable as Yorkshire's record was right down to the War, Kent, in these years, actually averaged a higher place in the Championship table, and that by cricket at once so brilliant and effective as to recall the great days of Mynn, Pilch, and Wenman. At the opening of the century we find the eleven consisting almost exclusively of amateurs, with the exception of the evergreen Alec Hearne, Huish, and Colin Blythe, who had just begun to make his mark. But the bowling depended chiefly on the captain, Mason, and Bradley, and very well they bore the burden for a year or two. It was in 1906 that Kent came right to the front.

The old régime, Mason, Blaker, and Burnup, though they only appeared in half the matches, played a very big part in this success; the latter especially scored very heavily, and at his best was so sound a batsman and so brilliant an out-fielder that, like his captain, he must be rated unlucky never to have been chosen for a Test Match. But it was the new generation that, with Blythe, turned the scale. Humphreys and Seymour had by now "arrived" as regular batsmen in the first half of the order; Frank Woolley, in this his first season, made it clear that Kent had unearthed an all-round player of the highest promise—indeed, *Wisden* of that winter actually prophesied for him the position which he has since attained—but the real sensation of the year, and the determining factor in Kent's success, was the form of K. L. Hutchings and Arthur Fielder.

Hutchings had done brilliantly for Tonbridge, for which he played five years, and had played some good innings for Kent in 1903; but no one was prepared for his meteoric success three years later. He did not come into the eleven until mid-June, yet a month later he was picked for the Gentlemen at Lord's, and for a couple of months was widely regarded as the most brilliant amateur batsman playing. In style he was a thorough individualist; in defence he was a good back-player: but he will be remembered best for his driving. Blessed with abnormally strong wrists and forearms, the power of his straight and on-driving was really alarming, yet there was no spectacular effort in the stroke, only a lightning acceleration at the vital moment. As a field, whether in the slips or in the out-fields, he was magnificent; with his crisp black hair, strong, athletic body and sparkling methods, he was the idol of Kent grounds.

In 1906, too, Fielder jumped suddenly straight into the front rank of fast bowlers, took all 10 wickets against the Gentlemen at Lord's, and played the decisive part in winning the Championship

T. RICHARDSON



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WILFRID RHODES

"ARTISTS"



*Sport & General*

for his county. In this and the following year he captured 368 wickets, and, though he could not subsequently maintain this form, he remained, right down to the War, an invaluable foil to the slow bowlers of the side. Of splendid physique and stamina, his pace was genuinely fast, without rivalling that of a Knox or Kortright. Bowling with a high action and always with a suggestion of great muscular power, he would sometimes bring the ball back a little from the off; but his real gift was in his power to swing the ball away. At his best, and with a new ball, he could pitch on the middle and leg and hit the off, but for the most part he relied on catches at the wicket and slip. Here he was wonderfully served by Huish and a succession of splendid slips in Mason, Hutchings, Seymour, and Frank Woolley.

In 1907 Kent suffered a set-back, due more than anything else to a lack of restraint in the batting, but from the next year right on to the War three Championships, two seconds, and three thirds represent the county's record. In these years the evolution from one generation to another was completed; in effect, a change from an amateur to a professional side. The batting was reinforced by Hardinge and Hubble, the bowling by Fairservice, and in the eleven which won the Championship in 1913 the captain, E. W. Dillon, was the only really regular amateur. One very important exception to this general process must, however, be noted. In the August of 1909 D. W. Carr came into the side, and for that and the next four summer holidays his leg-breaks and googlies proved a real terror to opposing batsmen. For a man of thirty-seven to be picked to bowl for the Gentlemen and for England in his very first season in first-class cricket was an astonishing performance, but no one could say that Carr did not deserve it. His length was good, his break extremely well disguised, and the best tribute possible to him comes from P. F. Warner, who, writing of a certain Middlesex and Kent match played on a very sticky wicket, said that the batsmen, rather than face Carr, tried to keep at Blythe's end! With Carr, Fielder, and Fairservice, a very steady medium-paced bowler whose spin on sticky wickets made him really formidable, and the two left-hand spinners, Blythe and Woolley, the Kent attack was, with the exception of Yorkshire, the best in England.

Woolley from the moment of his first appearance was recognized as a very good left-hand bowler, but splendidly though he did, especially in 1910 and 1912, he was inevitably overshadowed by his master and model, Blythe, and it was as an all-round player that he was picked for the representative elevens of 1911 and 1912. On sticky wickets he could be very difficult, but on hard, true pitches he had not Blythe's capacity for keeping down the runs, nor resolution when being hit. From the moment he appeared his batting impressed everybody, and, except for a slight set-back in

1910, his progress was steady and rapid. He had not the impenetrable defence of some men, perhaps he has not got it even to-day, though he was patently sounder after the War than before. But defence, as such, was never his *métier*. Essentially an attacking batsman, he combined in almost unequalled degree grace and power of stroke. Like another left-hander, Francis Ford, there was something almost lackadaisical in the long pendulum sweep of the bat, the calm poise of that tall and slender form; but his sense of timing has always been beautifully exact, and the power of his driving and of the forcing strokes off balls short of a length is really tremendous. Blessed with a quiet but charming personality, Frank Woolley has always represented the ideal type of professional cricketer; alone of Kentish men he has exceeded 25,000 runs in aggregate, whilst his figures with bat and ball combined are surpassed only by the Champions, Hirst and Rhodes.

Of other batsmen of this period, Hardinge, Humphreys, and Seymour were all first-rate. The two first were orthodox and rather modern in method: but Seymour was always a striking individualist, liable to spells of failure, but when in form a most dangerous player, with a remarkable array of strokes. Of amateurs, both Marsham and Dillon, who succeeded him in the leadership in 1909, played many a good innings, particularly when they were wanted. Sam Day, whenever he could find time to play in August, showed what a beautiful player he was, whilst Arthur Day, his younger brother, made over 1,000 runs for the county in the year after he left Malvern. Had he been able to play regularly, he would in all probability have played for England, for, apart from being a brilliant batsman, with more defence than some Malvern cricketers of his type, he was a more than useful fastish bowler, with pace off the pitch and a nasty late swing.

But when all is said, it is the figure of "Charlie" Blythe that stands out above his fellows as the greatest factor in the county's success.

Like another great Kent cricketer before him, Felix, Blythe was devoted to his violin, and this was symptomatic. His were the temperament and the methods of the artist, and to watch him from the ring, still more to bat against him on a sticky wicket, made one realize that here was bowling raised from a physical activity on to a higher plane. The very look on his face, the long, sensitive fingers, the elastic back sweep of the left arm before delivery, with the right hand thrown up in perfect balance against it, the short dancing approach, the long last stride, and the final flick of the arm as it came over—all these spoke of a highly sensitive and nervous instrument, beautifully co-ordinated, directed by a subtle mind, and inspired by a natural love for its art.

On sticky wickets, the quickness of his break and rise from the

pitch, combined with his perfect length, often made him practically unplayable. Caught Huish, stumped Huish, caught Woolley (at slip), caught Dillon (at "silly" point), the Kent score-cards of the age are littered with these legends. No less wonderful, in a way, was his work on plumb wickets, when flight would largely replace spin, and, with no wind to help him, he would vary his break with a swinger that left the ground at fully medium pace. Blythe went twice to Australia and once to South Africa without doing anything out of the ordinary, but at Leeds in the second Test Match against the great African side of 1907 he took 15 wickets for 99 runs, a feat that won the match and left him utterly exhausted from the nervous effort it had cost him. For his county, his success from 1900 to 1914 was uninterrupted, and he was bowling practically as well as ever at the end. For a detailed summary of his innumerable and marvellous bowling achievements the reader must turn to *Wisden's* for 1918. Here one must suffice. On a single day against Northampton he took 17 wickets for 48 runs!

Upon his highly strung nature the War must have been a strain almost unbearable, but when alternatives were easy he answered the call, and fell in France in November 1917. It is good to know that he is not forgotten, and that every year at the Canterbury Festival the visiting elevens place wreaths on the memorial, erected by the County Club on that ground, to the greatest of all the cricketers who fell in France.

#### Notts.

Except for one meteoric spurt when they won the Championship in 1907, Notts, between 1900 and 1914 were neither a particularly dangerous nor a notably engaging side. If their bowling frequently verged on the innocuous, however, another great opening pair arrived to succeed Shrewsbury and Gunn. A. O. Jones and Iremonger for a few years, indeed, formed almost as prolific a partnership as their predecessors. Between 1901 and 1906, before bowling claimed his chief attention, Iremonger was an admirable number one of the Shrewsbury school, particularly strong in defence and on the on-side. As a bowler he belonged to the conventional type of medium-pace off-spinners, but his length was good, he had some command of flight, and on sticky wickets could be really difficult.

His partner, Arthur Jones, was a truly great cricketer, not so much in pure technique as in his unlimited enthusiasm for the game and his genius for inspiring all those who played with him. There has probably never been a greater fielder, never certainly in the "gully," a place which he practically invented, and some of his catches there were positively miraculous; in "the country" he was almost as good; but, wherever he was, his presence would electrify the most lethargic side. Succeeding John Dixon as captain

of the county in 1900, and holding that office until the outbreak of war, he may not have been one of the great tacticians, but he was a born leader of men. As a batsman Jones was true to his temperament, debonair and brilliant, yet capable of playing with the greatest determination when things were going wrong. His off-driving was glorious, and his cutting as good. To his name stands the credit of the highest score in the county annals—296 against Gloucester in 1903—and amongst his twenty-four other centuries were innings of 274, 250, and 249.

The first years of the century saw also the rise to fame of that splendid all-round cricketer, John Gunn. Though never quite in the front rank, either as batsman or bowler, this sterling player was for years the backbone of his County Eleven, a left-hand batsman of the most stubborn and undisturbable kind, and a successful left-arm bowler, if not a great one.

His namesake, George, first made his mark in what was virtually his uncle's last season, 1903. His is, in some ways, one of the strangest figures that the game has given us. For any ordinary man his record for the county would be remarkable enough, and yet those most familiar with his batting must always have felt that it was in no sense a measure of his true abilities. For here, if anywhere, was genius for batting; the ordinary difficulties seemed not to exist for him, and, watching him when he was in the vein, one felt that few greater batsmen could have ever lived. In such a mood he would walk quietly down the wicket to meet the fastest bowler and push his length ball past mid-off to the ropes, or slide across to the off and slip it to fine-leg, or lie back and cut it for four—and all with an almost insolent ease that made batting look inevitable and the best bowling childish. Yet with these marvellous gifts there was some curious kink of temperament that prevented him from doing all that he could surely have done. As often as not he seemed more pleased to score singles than fours, more engaged in making the bowlers feel irritated than impotent, more inclined to concentrate on the refinements of defence than to give scope to his wonderful powers of attack. Gunn only once played for England at home, but his record in Australia, though brief, is splendid.

For a year or two Alletson was recognized as one of the biggest hitters playing, but his form was uncertain, and his fame would have been short-lived but for one positively colossal performance. Playing against Sussex at Hove, he scored 189 runs in ninety minutes. Before lunch he was relatively laboured, taking fifty minutes to score 47; but between 2.15 p.m. and 2.55 p.m. he added 142 more, his last 89 runs occupying him just a quarter of an hour. Two overs from Killick produced 56 runs, and two from Leach 34. He drove like Jehu, and he cut the ball full pitch into the pavilion.

For power and pace combined, this is probably the most remarkable piece of hitting in the whole history of county cricket.

Notts, then, had plenty of batting, and their scoring, especially at Trent Bridge, where the wickets were really too good, was generally heavy. But if they were to come right to the front, they needed either to discover one more first-class bowler or else to strike a really wet year. The latter condition was realized in 1907, and the Championship was theirs. For this result two men were really responsible, Wass and Hallam, and never have a pair of bowlers shouldered more completely and more successfully the task of carrying a county side on their backs. Of the 379 wickets that fell to the Notts attack that year they were responsible for 319! Hallam was a medium-paced bowler, something after Alfred Shaw in type, a model of accuracy, and always making the ball do a little one way or the other. Tom Wass—a roughish diamond, whose outspoken comments used regularly to go the round of county dressing-rooms—was that *avis rarissima*, a fast leg-break bowler. When the wicket helped him he could be virtually unplayable, so fast and so much did the ball turn, and he must rank as one of the greatest of the many great bowlers his county has produced. Eighteen times in his career he took 8 or more wickets in a single innings, but his greatest record was his 16 for 69 against Lancashire on the difficult Aigburth wicket in 1906.

#### LANCASHIRE.

For the first dozen years of this century Lancashire's record in the County Championship was almost a model of consistency, their average place for the period working out between third and fourth. The first year or two witnessed the transition from one epoch to another. In the first place, A. N. Hornby, who for over thirty years had been the life and soul of the county's cricket, dropped finally out of the side, handing over the reins of office to A. C. MacLaren. Then the next year, 1901, saw the departure of their two great bowlers, Mold and Briggs. The latter, after an Indian summer in the previous year, broke down in health, and with his tragic death in January 1902 there passed away one of the most cheerful and lovable personalities in cricket history. Mold's eclipse was probably accelerated by the fact that in the summer of 1900 he was no-balled for throwing by Jim Phillips—a decision that aroused some bitter comment up North, but was vigorously upheld by the bulk of expert opinion. Frank Sugg, that furious driver, had gone in 1899, and Albert Ward, the rock upon which many a bowler had spent himself in vain, followed him into retirement three years later. But there was still plenty of batting in the side. Johnny Tyldesley was now reaching the height of his brilliant

powers; MacLaren's ability to play regularly was an immense asset, though, in spite of many innings of consummate skill, he hardly won for himself a place amongst the really predominant batsmen in championship matches. Moreover, some first-rate recruits were unearthed at the critical time, notably Harold Garnett, a left-handed batsman who played so brilliantly in his second season of 1901 as to be included in the eleven which MacLaren took that winter to Australia; L. O. S. Poidevin, a thoroughly sound batsman from Australia; two good all-rounders in Hallows and Jack Sharp; and two new bowlers in Kermode—another Australian—and Sidney Barnes.

For a year or two at the beginning of the century the wickets at Old Trafford were definitely on the fiery side, and Sharp, who bowled really fast, had a great season in 1901, and was thought to be a potential successor to Mold. As a matter of fact, he soon lost his bowling and became an excellent forcing batsman. Kermode had three successful seasons from 1904 onwards, but passed out of the side under pressure of *avoids*. Sidney Barnes's connection with Lancashire was short-lived and curious. Discovered in League cricket in 1901, he was tried with success in the last match of that season, and promptly annexed by MacLaren for his Australian side. Next year was wet, and Barnes did fairly well; but it is entertaining to read in the *Wisden* for that year that the conditions suited him ill, owing to the fact that he relied on swing, and could not "break" the ball! In 1903 he took over 130 wickets, varying between days of irresistible success and others, when his temperament got the better of him, with disastrous results; but at the end of the season he had had enough of first-class cricket, and relapsed into the League from which he had emerged. Willis Cuttell, though his best work was done in the last years of the preceding century, was a slow-medium bowler of accuracy and perseverance, and played a considerable part in the triumph of 1904, departing two years later to succeed Tom Emmett at Rugby, where his wise enthusiasm did much for the school cricket.

But by far the most important addition in the Lancashire attack was forthcoming in 1903, when Walter Brearley first appeared to reinforce the side with his splendid fast bowling, galvanize its energies with his own superabundant vitality, and entertain all and sundry by his vigorous personality. The keynote of his bowling was strength and stamina. Himself something of an apostle of physical fitness, he would take great pains to train before and during a season, denying himself all smoking until after the day's play was over, but holding, at the same time, that there was never a good fast bowler who was a teetotaler! The result certainly justified his methods, for there was never a more untiring worker, and he has actually been known to bowl from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. unrelieved,

except for the luncheon and tea intervals. In style of delivery he closely resembled Mold, his run being no more than eight paces. What he may have lacked in elasticity he made up in sheer bodily strength, and his pace through the air and off the ground was genuinely fast. His best ball was the one that swung away late, and he was clever at altering the line of flight; but his great assets were pure pace, length, and, above all, a rooted conviction, as strong at the end of an exhausting day as at the beginning, that he was a better bowler than the other man was a batsman! Unfortunately he could only play with intermittent regularity, but he did wonders in 1905, when he played for England, and troubled Victor Trumper more than anyone else in the country, and again in 1908 and 1909 he was probably the best of our fast bowlers.

With Brearley's virtual debut for the county in 1903 coincided the return of R. H. Spooner from the South African War. Now Spooner realized the very high hopes that had been formed for him. At the end of that season he was asked to go to Australia with the side with which Pelham Warner recovered the "Ashes"; but neither then nor on a similar occasion later could he spare the time. His best effort, in home Tests, was probably a brilliant century in 1912 against the Africans. But his memory will not rest so much upon the figures that stand to his credit, admirable though they are, as upon the inimitable grace and charm of his style. As an off-driver he must rank with Lionel Palairet, but between the methods of the two lay a difference somewhat analogous to that between the old and new driving at golf. Palairet swept the ball away by the length and trueness and rhythm of his pendulum swing; Spooner hit it with a flashing flick of the wrist at the end of a more rapid and more circular orbit. Mr. Cardus has said that he "put a bloom on the orthodox," but he was never quite orthodox, because blessed with wrists and an eye which made strict orthodoxy superfluous. No English amateur batsman has ever made his art appear at once more beautiful, effortless, and electric; and of him, as of Joseph Guy, in an earlier day, it might fairly be said that he was "elegance, all elegance, fit to play before the Queen in her parlour." He was also amongst the very greatest fieldsmen at cover-point.

With Johnny Tyldesley in wonderful form in 1904, Spooner not far behind him, batting down to No. 8, a variety of bowling, and one of the outstanding all-rounders of the season in J. Hallows, Lancashire were a most formidable side. For the first time since 1897 they carried off the Championship, and were undefeated. From then until the War, Lancashire's best seasons were from 1909-12, during which they were never lower than fourth. Makepeace by then had quite come into his own, while the left-arm bowling of Dean was almost equally effective, whether on dry



turf he emulated the methods of Hirst, or, after rain, he reduced his pace and bowled on orthodox lines.

#### WARWICKSHIRE.

Having now followed the fortunes of the "Big Six" among the counties, we pass naturally to Warwickshire, the only eleven to dispute their ascendancy in the present century; and as I have not yet dealt with any of their history, we must retrace our steps a little way back behind the proper limits of this chapter.

Warwickshire began to play cricket as a County Eleven in 1882, and their beautiful ground at Edgbaston, the subsequent venue of Test Matches and the land of which Johnny Tyldesley must always have dreamed, was opened four years later. But it was not until 1894 that the county, in company with five other "recruits," was admitted to first-class rank. Their debut in that company was an unmistakable success. The only side in the country to lower the colours of Surrey at the Oval, they also defeated Notts and Kent, and ended up with a record of seven wins against but three defeats. From that good beginning Warwickshire never seriously looked back until 1908, their average place in the table for that period working out at seventh. In batting the county was well equipped. Two of their early heroes, H. C. Maul and L. C. Docker, had dropped out before their side's matches were reckoned in the first-class Championship; but the tradition they had established for fine hitting and brave enterprise was worthily sustained by Diver, who, with Richard Daft, J. H. Parsons and W. R. Hammond, played for both the Gentlemen and the Players, Devey, the famous footballer of Aston Villa, and the old Etonian, H. W. Bainbridge. The last named, a brilliant batsman, especially on slow wickets, captained the eleven from 1890 until succeeded in 1902 by that famous Rugby international, J. F. Byrne.

Soon after their elevation, Warwickshire's two stock bowlers, Pallett and Shilton, passed into retirement, and until the beginning of the new century the county attack was not at all formidable, especially on the superb wickets which were already making their ground a byword for run-getting. The brunt of the work fell on the willing shoulders of Sydney Santall, a capital medium-paced bowler, who for twenty years served his county devotedly, took in them more wickets than any other Warwickshire bowler, on retirement wrote the history of its cricket, and now sees his son carrying on the family tradition. But with the beginning of the present century two reinforcements arrived destined to play a big part in Warwickshire's future. At that time England was rich in slow left-hand bowlers, but Sam Hargreaves soon made good a claim to be rated among the best of them. He had a beautiful lively

run-up, kept a splendid length, and often made the ball come in sharply with his arm.

But more important still was the advent of Frank Field. Dogged throughout his career with muscular misfortunes, Field remained undaunted, and a cheerier, stouter-hearted bowler never put on a boot. If the highest honours in the game never came his way, he was for many years of a class that would have sailed into our post-war Test teams, for he bowled really fast, could use anything in the wicket to bring out a big off-break, and no day was too long or too hot for him. Of his greatest triumph we shall speak shortly.

By this time some of the old batting stalwarts had dropped out, but others were found to fill the gaps, and noticeably the two professionals Charlesworth and Kinneir, to be joined later by C. S. Baker. But the backbone of Warwickshire was then, and for many a long year, supplied by Lilley and W. G. Quaife. In the whole history of professional cricket there is no more honourable name than Lilley's. There have been, perhaps, more brilliant wicket-keepers, but surely none more sound and consistent, or with a quieter and more convincing method. Only Oldfield, with ninety victims against his eighty-four, has a more remarkable record in Tests between England and Australia. Then to his skill with the gloves Lilley added the great asset of batsmanship far above the common order. He has told us himself how much he owed to the coaching and example of that great batsman, Arthur Shrewsbury; but to the soundness of defence, which no doubt he acquired from his master, Lilley added an enterprise and power of driving which made him not only a tough nut to crack, but a bad man to hold.

And what are we to say of that pocket and ageless marvel, W. G. Quaife? In the first place, I think, that of all the batsmen who have appeared in county cricket in the last thirty years, not one could be selected as a better, even perhaps so good, a model for the young cricketer to watch. With physical limitations more normal to a boy of fifteen, Quaife yet contrived so to master the art of batting as to excel in aggregate all but a dozen or so English cricketers. Sometimes he may have been slow, but never dull, at least to the spectator with an eye for perfect balance, footwork, and bat-control. He had every stroke in the game; Richardson on a fiery wicket, Rhodes on a "glue-pot," would find him equally unperturbed.

Warwickshire suffered a brief but decided set-back in 1908-10 before they rose to the summit of every county's ambition in 1911. The season opened inauspiciously enough, with a crushing defeat by Surrey at the Oval. Before the end of June they had lost three more matches, but from an overwhelming victory over Hants on the first of July they never looked back, and in their last dozen games actually secured 54 points out of a possible 60. The new system of "first innings points" stood them in good stead, and

Kent, possibly a finer all-round side, were only robbed of supremacy by a narrow defeat at the Oval; but nothing could seriously detract from a great triumph.

Their batting was extremely consistent, and, in this season at least, could never be condemned as dull. The fast wickets favoured them, and Field, for once unhampered by injury, had the greatest season of his career. But the secret of their success lay in the wonderful all-round form of a young cricketer, twenty-two years old—F. R. Foster. As *Wisden* afterwards commented, "Not since W. G. Grace in the early days of the Gloucester Eleven has so young a captain been such a match-winning force on a county side."

Frank Foster first appeared for his county in a few games in 1908, and though he did nothing out of the ordinary, so good a judge as Lilley then prophesied for him a brilliant future. Two years later he had advanced so far as a bowler as to make a distinguished mark for himself in the Gentlemen *v.* Players' matches. It can be imagined, then, with what dismay his county heard at the beginning of 1911 that he had decided to drop out of first-class cricket. Fortunately, he reconsidered his decision, and the result was a summer of extraordinary personal triumph. If his bowling more than fulfilled all expectations, his batting far transcended them, and there was about all his cricket an atmosphere of supreme confidence and inexhaustible vitality that acted as a wonderful inspiration to his side. A brilliant batsman who attacked the bowling from the moment he went in, he played some astonishing innings, notably a 200 against Surrey at Birmingham. In one less physically gifted such batting success might well have reacted on his bowling, but with Foster the one seemed only to stimulate the other, and a century against Yorkshire but heralded the capture of 9 wickets in an innings.

Left-hand fast medium through the air, he came off the pitch like lightning; occasionally the ball would "straighten back," but as a rule it would whip across with his arm. If the batsman played it, there were the leg-traps to evade; if he missed it, his own legs were likely to give his error a highly coloured advertisement for a week afterwards. On his return from Australia Foster continued to enjoy great success, and it was a tragedy that a serious accident in the interval of the War should have cut short so phenomenal a career.

When, in 1911, Lilley dropped out of the side, his rôle of batsman-wicket-keeper was taken over by "Tiger" Smith; the latter's work in Australia in combination with his captain, Foster, was often brilliant, and he kept wicket for England in all six matches of the Triangular Tournament.

## HAMPSHIRE.

In the early years of this century Hampshire lacked the financial resources to maintain a considerable staff of professionals, whilst many of their best amateurs, being soldiers, could only assist intermittently; it is only necessary to recall the names of Major Poore, Major Wynyard, and Captain Greig, to realize how serious a loss this was; all three were batsmen of very high class. Their captain, E. M. Sprot, was a great-hearted player with a fine forcing method, and A. J. L. Hill, whenever he could get away, a batsman of delightful strokes and enterprise, but for ten years or so the batting was very moderate, and the bowling decidedly worse. The brunt of the work was done by Llewellyn, a South African, who, until the appearance of Fleetwood-Smith, was the only left-hander known to bowl the "googly." Some support was forthcoming from two fast bowlers, Hesketh-Prichard, and Badcock, and in 1908 the county had a real find in Jack Newman; in 1910 he and Llewellyn lifted Hampshire to the honourable position of sixth. Two years later the attack had been reinforced by Brown's pace and the development of Kennedy to something like his full powers. Moreover, the batting was by now really formidable. Charles Fry, though never able to play for the county of his adoption with real regularity, clearly showed that he had lost nothing of his skill. Splendid recruits had been won from the Services in Captain (now Lieutenant-Colonel) A. C. Johnston and Captain E. I. M. Barrett, and, lastly, Philip Mead had by this time established himself as one of the greatest batsmen in England. Moreover, the fielding was quite brilliant, and altogether Hants were a danger to any county, and in the sporting and cheerful temper of their play one of the most attractive elevens playing. In 1913 two dashing batsmen, in the Hon. L. H. Tennyson and the sailor, Lieutenant C. H. Abercrombie, made most promising debuts.

The War dealt the county two cruel blows, Captain Johnston, for whom the highest honours in the game were clearly possible, was so badly wounded in the leg that he had to content himself with playing in club cricket, where his success was a glorious tribute alike to his skill and unconquerable spirit. In the second place, Arthur Jacques fell in action, and in him the county lost its future captain and a splendid asset in attack. In the two seasons before the War he had appeared as something of a new factor in first-class cricket. Tall and loose-limbed, he bowled fastish medium, with a pronounced in-swing and a serried array of leg-traps disposed near the wicket. With Newman rather out of form, he and Kennedy had shouldered the burden of the attack in 1914, and with such success that Hants rose to fifth place in the Championship.

## ESSEX.

The super-excellence of the Leyton wicket, and a decline in the quality of the bowling following Kortright's retirement, combined to rob Essex matches of sting and hard fighting until Johnny Douglas, after a slow maturing, came right to the front in 1911, when he succeeded F. L. Fane in the captaincy. In that year a fine, all-round performance for the Gentlemen at Lord's marked him out as the man for big occasions, a rôle which he thereafter consistently sustained. As befits an ex-middle-weight Olympic champion, he stood pre-eminently for fitness and tenacity. Always in perfect physical trim, he radiated health and strength. In batting he dearly loved a crisis, through which he would battle with inexhaustible patience, a dogged defence, and no particular repertoire of strokes. Invaluable though he constantly was, he could never be called a great batsman; but in bowling he often rose to unquestionable greatness. His pace was not absolutely fast, but his own vitality gave a "life" to the ball that was a very fair substitute for pure speed. His greatest asset was the ability to swing the ball either way so late in its flight that the swing was almost equivalent to break. Bowling into a dead head breeze, with a little help in the wicket, Douglas could be one of the very best bowlers that England has seen in the last thirty years, a verdict which Jack Hobbs has decisively confirmed.

Had the attack been stronger, or had it, even such as it was, been supported by first-class fielding, Essex would have been quite a formidable side, for the batting was always respectable, and at times definitely strong. A. P. Lucas and H. G. Owen, who together had done so much for the county in its early days, dropped out of the side at the beginning of the century; but not before they had seen their places most adequately filled by the two young amateurs, Perrin and McGahey, and the professional, Carpenter. McGahey, the elder of the "Essex Twins," first made his mark for the county in 1895, and for the next fifteen years was a most consistent run-getter. At the outset a hitter by nature, he soon learnt to improve his defence, and in 1901 was one of the heaviest scorers of the season, incidentally reinforcing his value by learning to bowl leg-breaks with considerable success, his all-round form winning him a place in the team that visited Australia that winter. In later years he became slower in method, but his wicket was always a hard one to get.

At the risk of doing injustice to that admittedly great player, A. P. Lucas, we must yet write down Percy Perrin as the greatest batsman that has ever played for Essex, and we may perhaps go even further and say that he is the best amateur batsman who has failed to play for England, failure for which his slowness in the field was certainly responsible. But in county cricket he was a

veritable pillar of reliability. Tall and strong, Perrin was by natural bent a forward player, and in his prime was a magnificent off-driver; but he soon learnt to reinforce his defence by back-play, and to improve his scoring powers on the on-side. From the day on which he first met Richardson at the Oval, and established himself in an hour with a splendid 50, he was always a magnificent player to fast bowling, exhibiting, in common with only the really great batsmen, that curious power of dealing with the fastest ball with completely unharassed, almost casual, ease. His biggest innings was the 343 not out in the famous match at Chesterfield in which Derby, after going in against a total of 597, won the game by 9 wickets. He played more than thirty years for Essex, and scored over 30,000 runs.

Of other Essex batsmen, we can do no more than mention two. F. L. Fane should perhaps be best remembered for his success with the M.C.C. South African Eleven of 1905-6, when, more than any of his colleagues, he held his own against the new and formidable menace of the googly on matting. But for close on twenty years his attractive forward style was a familiar feature on Essex grounds, the seasons of 1906 and 1911 bringing him special distinction.

The Rev. F. H. Gillingham was never able to play regularly, but on his intermittent holidays he very rarely failed to play some sparkling innings, never to inspire the side with his enterprise and optimism. A batsman after the order of D'Artagnan, he believed in offence, and nothing amused him more than taking a fast bowler by the scruff of the neck at the beginning of an innings. Had circumstances allowed him to play more regularly, he would certainly have improved his defence—his natural temperament would have looked after attack—and he might well have risen high amongst amateur batsmen.

#### GLoucester.

Charles Townsend's regular assistance ended in 1900, while Gilbert Jessop, Gloucestershire's new captain, never afterwards touched the form which obtained a hundred wickets, as well as 2,200 runs, in that summer. Happily George Dennett's arrival in 1903 did much to solve the bowling problem. Right up to the War Dennett averaged over 150 wickets a season for under 20 apiece, an astonishingly low figure for a really slow bowler who could never be nursed, and was for the greater portion of his career the only really reliable performer on the side. It was unfortunate for him that throughout his career the presence of Rhodes and Blythe denied to him the highest honours which otherwise must surely have been his.

Of course, there was Jessop, an explosive force of incalculable

power—and no great hitter has been so consistent—but his value to the side would have been immeasurably enhanced if only he had had some really reliable batsmen in support. There were some excellent amateurs qualified, but they could play but spasmodically. Apart from Townsend, Frank Champain was a beautiful batsman on the off-side, and C. O. H. Sewell a brilliant stroke-player. The professional batting was undistinguished until the arrival of Dipper, who from the day on which he was taken “straight from the plough” to face Blythe on a sticky wicket, steadily advanced in execution, until he became one of the soundest, as he was one of the most imperturbable, batsmen playing. At the start of his career Dipper was almost humorously unsophisticated in manner and method, but even then he was gifted with the natural batsman’s genius for footwork, and, if not particularly attractive to watch, he was certainly a master of on-side play, and of the temper that, on reaching one hundred, settles down without change of expression or alteration of style to pursue the next.

For all their limitations, Gloucester can be left with one happy reflection: their fielding as a rule was splendid. Jessop, of course, was Jessop—no more need, or can, be said; but Wrathall was first-rate in the country, and Frank Champain, Sewell, W. S. A. Brown, and L. D. Brownlee all were in the very top class. In Jack Board they had an excellent wicket-keeper, a batsman of wonderful courage and innumerable bruises, a most lovable and cheerful personality—and one of the very worst judges of a run that ever lived!

#### SOMERSET.

By far the greatest acquisition to Somerset’s ranks at the beginning of the century was Braund. When, rejected by Surrey, he first appeared at Taunton, his was an arresting figure, young, lithe, and full of vitality. An eminently sound batsman, he supplied admirable ballast to the somewhat spasmodic batting of the side as a whole, and was good enough to score a couple of centuries for England in Test Matches in Australia. As a slip-fielder he has had very few equals, and is the hero of more than one catch which has become historic; but at this time it was his leg-break bowling that won him most fame and carried his side to some of their most prized victories. It is questionable whether, since A. G. Steel, a better bowler of his type had appeared in English cricket. His flight was hard to judge, his finger-spin great, and his pace off the ground and accuracy, especially on sticky wickets, quite exceptional for a leg-break bowler. In 1902, besides making nearly 1,500 runs, he was in wonderful form with the ball, his 172 wickets costing less than 20 each, and he and Cranfield were a really formidable pair. If Sam Woods had long since ceased to be a power in attack, and if

his batting too had passed its dangerous best, Somerset still had in him the most inspiring captain and one of the most popular cricketers playing.

Unfortunately, however, he was not long destined to command such considerable talent. Lionel Palairet virtually dropped out of the side in 1904, and the one batsman who might have gone far to replace him—that beautiful stylist, P. R. Johnson—could never get away to play with real regularity. In H. Martyn a splendid hitter and a wicket-keeper of almost incomparable brilliance was unearthed, only to drop out just when his full value had become manifest. In short, the old strain of amateur batting talent was running out. Worse still, the triumphs of Braund and Cranfield with the ball had proved short-lived, and by 1905 they were only a shadow of what they had been.

Woods resigned the captaincy at the end of 1906, and in 1908 John Daniell entered upon his long term of office. Herein, at least, Somerset must be accounted lucky to have found two such leaders in succession, born captains both, who could themselves set a standard in fielding, delighted in a crisis as batsmen, and as men remained undaunted by difficulties and disappointments. Of such troubles Daniell had full measure in the years down to the War; often it was only with difficulty that the county could raise a side (thirty-eight different players appeared for her in 1910), the batting was most unreliable, and the bowling went from bad to worse. Here, however, there were two bright spots, in the appearance of W. T. Greswell and J. C. White. The former was one of the very earliest right-hand medium bowlers with a definite and late in-swing, and, on appearing at Taunton in the August after leaving school, met with immediate success. In 1909 he was the mainstay of the attack, and it was a tragedy for Somerset that he should have then left for Ceylon. The last of Somerset's pre-War bowlers, White, first made his name in 1913, and was for twenty years the mainstay of the attack. Unlike most slow left-handers, he relied less upon spin than upon a peculiarity of flight, which made the ball swerve in from the off late in its course, with, in addition, a distinct tendency to dip. This, coupled with a most accurate length and a physique that enabled him to bowl all day, made him a pillar of strength to Somerset.

#### WORCESTERSHIRE.

It was in 1899 that Worcester, after an eminently successful season with the Minor Counties, were first admitted to Championship rank. From the very outset it was clear that, when they could command their full strength, their batting at least was strong enough to make a good showing, even against the best attacks.



It was not for nothing that the Press of the day often dubbed the county "Fostershire." In the first place, the eldest of the family, Harry, devoted himself whole-heartedly to the cause; apart from his splendid batting, the county owed to his leadership an incalculable debt. There have been few better captains, whether in resource or personality; none, surely, who on the field could make his opponents more conscious of an atmosphere of intelligent attack, without impairing for one moment its chivalry and good cheer. Then, too, if the brothers could not join forces regularly, their success, when they did appear, was perhaps all the more striking. In Worcester's great year, 1907, when they twice beat Yorkshire and finished second in the table to Notts, H. K. was reinforced by R. E. and G. N., and the three ended up at the top of the averages. Not since the days of the Graces had one family contributed so much to the success of a county side.

But the cricket of the Fosters is not to be measured in aggregate of runs, however well it may stand that test. It was not so much what they did as the way they did it. Trained on that run-getters' paradise, the Malvern ground, they stood as an epitome of public-school batting: blessed with those two supreme athletic gifts, a fine eye and a wellnigh perfectly co-ordinated physique, they found all ball-games easy, and this natural facility prompted a general attitude at the wicket of "Here is a ball—let's hit it!" Thus endowed, they could play every stroke, but in the main they remained true to their school traditions, and specialized in the drive, the cut, and, especially in the case of H. K., that half-drive, half-cut, now rarely seen, which sent the ball humming through "the covers"—a stroke worthy of an amateur rackets champion.

W. B. Burns, a dashing batsman full of strokes and courage, and, for a year or two round about 1910, for a few overs a bowler of really intimidating pace, was a real asset, but much of the work, as usual, had to be borne by professional shoulders, and here Bowley must surely hold pride of place. For twenty seasons did he play for Worcestershire, in fifteen of them exceeded a thousand runs, and those runs were made with a charm and ease which very few professionals have rivalled. With Bowley one naturally associates Pearson, his partner in a thousand fights, less of a stylist but an efficient batsman, fond of the on-side forcing strokes, and a better bowler in the forties than he ever was before.

But Worcester's great all-rounder was Ted Arnold. It was he more than any other man whose cricket had raised the county into the first division of the Championship, and for the next ten years he remained the greatest power on the side. A sound and resourceful batsman who could at will defend stubbornly or exploit remarkable powers of driving, it was yet primarily as a bowler that he was included in 1903 in the M.C.C. side to Australia, where

he met with marked success. Tall and loose-limbed, he bowled fastish-medium from a considerable height; with the new ball he had a very late leg-swerve, which he could often start straight enough to hit the wicket. He was always quick off the pitch, and would often make the ball get up uncomfortably high; on sticky wickets his off-break was pronounced.

It was unfortunate that there was little variety in the change bowling: Pearson soon abandoned his leg-breaks for a more stereotyped style; and for match-winning attack the county could look to Arnold and George Wilson alone. In that pre-eminent era of fast bowlers, the latter never, perhaps, attained the front rank, nor was he consistent enough to make his figures very remarkable reading at the end of a season, but on his good days he was as destructive a bowler as any in England. He was genuinely fast, bowled practically round-arm, and whipped across from leg very late in his flight. Another fast bowler had done well for Worcester at the beginning of the century in the person of Burrows, but he quite failed to maintain his form for the next few years, only to "come again" about the time that Wilson fell out of the side, and do most loyal service right down to the War, bowling, indeed, better at the age of forty than ever before: a popular and splendid figure, Dick Burrows, with his huge shoulders, beaming face, and undaunted heart.

A further reinforcement to the attack was forthcoming in 1907 in the success of Cuffe, a good left-hand bowler who developed four years later into an all-rounder second only to Arnold, but it was left to an amateur to provide the most interesting feature of the county's out-cricket. If Simpson-Hayward is to be regarded as the last of the lob-bowlers, he was also a unique specimen of his type. A fine, all-round cricketer at Malvern, he had, both at school and Cambridge, bowled fast over-hand. It was during one of his summer vacations at home that he began to turn his mind to the possibilities of spin being imparted to a cricket-ball by the same finger process as imparts it to a top—in fact, by genuine thumb-and-finger flip. Blessed with exceptionally strong fingers, he found that there was nothing impracticable in the idea; but it took him some few years of patient practice before he was sure enough of control to try his hand in first-class cricket. His success was immediate, but he could never really spare the time to follow it up until 1908. In that and the following year he was probably more formidable to the best batsmen on the best wickets than had been any lob-bowler before him, and when he went out with the M.C.C. team to South Africa for the winter of 1910-1911, he showed that on matting he could be even more formidable, taking in the first Test Match at Johannesburg 6 wickets for 42 runs. Unlike most of his kidney, Simpson-Hayward did not get very many of his wickets "in the air"; his flight, to my thinking, was the weakest element

in his bowling, though he bowled the high full pitch with effrontery and aplomb. It was the pace of his off-break that beat you, and in this I doubt whether any lob-bowler could rival him. His leg-break was conventionally bowled, turned much slower and was much less deadly.

From their successes in 1907-1908 Worcester steadily declined, though they had one bright season in the fine summer of 1911. They were rewarded by at least one discovery who gave fair promise of developing into an England player. In 1913, at the age of but seventeen and a half, Frank Chester actually scored three centuries for his county, and that in a style that earned the warmest praise. The war cost him an arm, but it did not succeed in parting him from the cricket field, where he has since attained a unique reputation as an umpire. Eyesight, judgment, character, and enthusiasm are all his, and county cricket has been the better for it.

#### NORTHANTS.

It was in 1905 that Northants were admitted to first-class rank. For a year or two they were admittedly a weak combination, which owed almost everything to one man, George Thompson, who was at once the best batsman and bowler in the eleven. The turning-point in the county's fortunes came in the year 1909, with the advent of a really brilliant all-round cricketer in S. G. Smith. Born in the West Indies, Smith was the outstanding member of the team that visited England from those islands in 1906. Qualifying for Northants, he met with instantaneous success in his first season of county cricket, pulling off the double event of 100 wickets and 1,000 runs. By nature a brilliant hitter, he soon learnt defence and throughout his cricket career showed a remarkable adaptability to circumstances. As a left-hand slow bowler he was extremely accurate, always looked hittable, and rarely failed to come out on top if a batsman went out to hit him. The advent of such a bowler took a great load off Thompson's shoulders, to which he immediately responded by coming out with by far his finest performance with the ball, 163 wickets for 14 each.

By this time, moreover, another bowler had been unearthed in "Bumper" Wells, who, as his name suggests, could make the ball fly very disagreeably, and altogether the county attack was by now stronger than most. The batting was still not strong, but Smith made a vast difference. Thompson, Pool, Vials, and the captain, Manning, all did quite well, and Northants ended up very creditably seventh in the table. In the two following years Smith's bowling largely deserted him, and the side receded in consequence; but in 1912 he recovered, and the county enjoyed a real triumph. True their programme was still rather a modest one, and they did not

meet some of the strongest counties, but the fact remains that of eighteen fixtures they lost but one, and ended second to Yorkshire in the Championship. This success, following immediately after Warwickshire's even more spectacular effort in the preceding year, was undoubtedly good for cricket in general and the competition in particular, for it made the public realize that the blue riband was not necessarily the monopoly of the famous and wealthy few.

To a countryside born and bred to sport the success of their eleven brought much pride, but to none, surely, did it mean more than to George Thompson. So far as it can be said of a professional, the county's cricket was his creation; he had bowled and batted her into first-class rank, had laboured whole-heartedly to keep her there when the fight was all uphill and easy honours invited him elsewhere, and at last he had his reward. A more genuine, thorough cricketer never played.

#### DERBYSHIRE.

As early as 1871, Derbyshire had met Lancashire at Old Trafford, but though they played county matches for the next sixteen years, and had in William Mycroft a very fine bowler, they do not seem to have reached first-class status for good until 1894, when, under the leadership of that slashing cutter, Herbert Evershed, they could then point to at least three fine professional players in George Davidson, W. Chatterton, and William Storer, not to mention their two bowlers, Hulme and Porter. Of these the most famous was Storer, a magnificent wicket-keeper and one of the very first to "stand up" to really fast bowling. He "kept" for England in 1899, and when Lilley replaced him behind the stumps he was still so good a batsman as to continue to be selected for the Players at Lord's on that score alone.

But with the beginning of this century the old generation were passing or had passed from the Derby ranks, and the batting was beginning to develop a weakness which long remained unrepaiied. For a year or two much was done by Dr. Ashcroft, a model of consistency, and Storer did not drop out until after 1904; but the greater burden was shouldered by L. G. Wright, who in happier circumstances might have gone far, and, even as it was, in 1905 proved one of the heaviest and most consistent scorers amongst amateurs then playing. He was, moreover, one of the last survivals of the genuine old-fashioned point, where his courage, enterprise, and agility were one of the sights of the cricket field. Another figure that recurs to memory is that of C. A. Ollivierre, the West Indian, who for three years, from 1902 onwards, played some truly brilliant, if inconsistent, cricket.

In attack almost everything depended on the two fast bowlers,

Warren and Bestwick, of whom the former played for England in 1905, and the latter defied the laws of *anno Domini* by appearing for the Players at Lord's for the first time at the age of forty-three, more than twenty years since he first appeared in first-class cricket. Had these two bowlers reached their best a few years before they did, and before the former generation of batsmen had passed on, Derby might well have had a fine side; as it was, they could do little in face of the deplorable weakness of the county's batting. In more recent times the county has owed most of what little success has come its way to those two hard-working professionals, Cadman and Morton. Derbyshire have never enjoyed any great measure of popular support, but if there is nothing very exhilarating in their cricket history, we can at least end it with a brief reference to one of the most amazing matches ever played, in which the county appears in an altogether triumphant light. It was at Chesterfield in 1904. Essex won the toss, and on a wicket that from the very first was distinctly lively put together the mammoth total of 597, of which Percy Perrin was responsible for 343 not out. Nothing daunted, Derby replied with 548, thanks chiefly to Ollivierre, who hit most brilliantly for 229. Then Warren and Bestwick proceeded to rattle Essex out for 97, and after Wright had been dismissed for a single, Ollivierre (92) and Storer (48) knocked off the runs, and the side that had gone in against a total of virtually 600 triumphed by 9 wickets. Prodeigious!

#### LEICESTERSHIRE.

If of late years Leicester have earned rather an unenviable reputation for slow cricket, this was very far from true of them in the early years of the century, when they had an attractive side of batsmen. The tone was set by their captain, that breezy hitter, C. E. de Trafford; the brake was applied by C. J. B. Wood, whose method, if somewhat industrious, was so sound as to make him for years one of the most consistent scorers amongst amateur batsmen, and the normal pace regulated by those prolific scorers, Albert Knight and Jack King. Knight was a fine off-side player, especially in the square drive, now virtually the prerogative of left-handers; in 1903 he celebrated his selection for the Players at Lord's by compiling an admirable century, but in the next year saw his feat thoroughly eclipsed by his colleague, King, who, brought into the match at the eleventh hour, scored a hundred in each innings. A left-hander of great resource and wide variety of stroke, the latter made more runs for Leicestershire than anyone, retiring only in 1925 when he was the oldest county cricketer playing.

The years 1904 and 1905 saw the county at its best, their batsmen in consistent form, and supported by bowling of some preten-

sions, notably that of Jayes, whose early death from consumption cut short a brilliant career.

### SUSSEX

So long as Fry and Ranji were with them Sussex were very hard to beat, and for the first six years of the century their average place works out at very little worse than third; but their attack was never strong enough to make them a rival to the champion sides. The wet year of 1902 saw Fred Tate in splendid form and Joe Vine in 1901 had great success with his leg-breaks, but for years the main burden of attack rested on the willing shoulders of Albert Relf and Cox. Cox was never in the rank of the great slow left-handers, but accuracy and a certain peculiarity of flight continued to win him a harvest of wickets until he was well over fifty. Albert Relf's all-round record is still unsurpassed in Sussex annals: for eleven consecutive seasons his bag of wickets exceeded 100, and in eight of these he scored over 1,000 runs. A medium-pace bowler with a quick rotary action, he was extremely accurate and quick off the pitch; on sticky wickets he was really difficult, and given any help from wind or atmosphere he could swing the ball late and either way: a strong and sound batsman he revelled in hard work. Ever since Bland dropped out of the eleven, Sussex's great need was for fast bowling, and this was never really satisfied till the advent of Arthur Gilligan. The old Malvernian, H. L. Simms, had one brilliant season in 1912 and from 1906 onwards the younger Relf brought valuable help; but though "pacey" he was not really fast. Of the batsmen of this period Joe Vine easily held pride of place. His aggregate of nearly 25,000 runs for the county exceeds even that of Fry. As the latter's opening partner he saw the century go up thirty-three times, and though at this time he concentrated largely on defence, he showed towards the close of his career that he could force the game well when the situation called for it. A magnificent outfield, he can claim one record unparalleled, I believe, in the history of the game—421 consecutive appearances for his county eleven. To support Vine, Killick, a left-hander who wore glasses, generally got 1,000 runs in the year and the younger Relf was a brilliant driver, but got himself out rather often. Other useful batsmen were R. B. Heygate and H. P. Chaplin, the latter of whom succeeded to the captaincy in 1910. Finally mention might be made of Harry Butt for his devoted work behind the stumps: few wicket-keepers' hands suffered more; none have stuck to their work with greater courage.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### AMATEUR CRICKET, 1900-1914

#### GENTLEMEN AND PLAYERS.

THE Gentlemen *v.* Players match of 1900 provided some most sensational cricket. Ten days before R. E. Foster had played his record innings in the University match; on opening his innings on this bigger occasion he seemed somewhat over-anxious, and was actually half an hour before he scored his first run; but the luncheon interval entirely altered his attitude, and in an hour and a quarter more he had raised his score to 102 by batting of the most brilliant description. Facing a total of 297, the Players failed very badly against Jessop and Mason, and were all out for 136. Fry was then once more seen at his best for 72, and Foster surpassed himself, scoring 136 in less than an hour and three-quarters, his cutting and off-driving being quite wonderful. No player, let alone an undergraduate, had ever yet made a double hundred in this match. Of his 238 runs, 156 came in fours! With the Gentlemen 400 runs on for the loss of three men, their captain, Sam Woods, gave orders to get on or get out, desiring to have a bowl at the enemy that evening. The remaining 7 wickets accordingly fell for 101 runs, and the Players lost Albert Ward's valuable wicket for 44 overnight.

The last day was epoch-making. Abel and Brown played superbly, and at lunch were still together with the score 241 for 2. Immediately afterwards Abel was caught for 98, but Hayward then helped Brown to add another 100 before the Yorkshireman was out for an innings of 163, in which he had exploited his favourite stroke, the late-cut, to perfection. Hayward went on to score another century, and victory seemed assured. But the Gentlemen rallied, and he, Lilley, and John Gunn were in turn dismissed, leaving Rhodes and Trott together; 16 runs wanted, and only Walter Mead to come in. At half-past six the game was a tie; apparently there was then no provision for the extra half-hour, for Lilley records it as an act of generous sportsmanship on the part of Woods that he demanded an extra over, took the ball himself, and saw Rhodes make the winning hit.

In the next two years the Players were very strongly represented, especially in bowling, and always had the measure of their opponents, whose batsmen quite failed to play up to form. In 1901, thanks to a brilliant 140 by Tyldesley, the Players totalled 394; the Gentlemen then replied with 200 for 1 wicket, Fry 126, only to lose their remaining 9 for 45 runs to Lockwood and Hirst. They were never afterwards in the hunt, and lost by 221 runs. The next match saw them even more outclassed, and beaten by an innings. In this Lockwood and Braund enjoyed an immense triumph, each scoring a century and taking between them 16 wickets.

We now come to 1903, and the most remarkable batting performance in the whole history of the match. For two days the Gentlemen had been utterly outplayed, and when play began on the third morning the situation was that, with Warner out, they were still 244 runs behind in their second innings, and the wicket, though not really fiery, was definitely not plumb. The Players had certainly no accredited fast bowler, and Barnes had broken down early in the match; but with Arnold, Braund, Hargreave, Trott, and John Gunn, their attack was very far from negligible. Ranjitsinhji helped Fry to add 142 runs in an hour and a half before luncheon, and when he was caught at the wicket the latter was joined by MacLaren. In rather less than three hours the two great batsmen added 309, and when MacLaren declared they were still undefeated. The whole performance was so extraordinary that I think it worth while to reproduce the second innings' score in full:—

C. B. Fry, not out .. .. .	232
P. F. Warner, c Hunter, b Hargreave .. .. .	27
K. S. Ranjitsinhji, c Hunter, b Gunn .. .. .	60
A. C. MacLaren, not out .. .. .	168
Extras .. .. .	13
Total (2 wkts. dec.) .. .. .	500

It was now five years since the amateurs had won at Lord's, but in 1904 they battled through to victory, by a narrow margin it is true, but after a recovery that spoke volumes for their determination. The wicket was very lively, and the Players did well to score 327 against some good fast bowling by the novelist and explorer, Hesketh-Prichard. Hayward played a grand innings of 88, but the first honours went to King of Leicestershire. An injury to Tyldesley had left the Players side a man short on the morning of the match, and King, present as a member of the M.C.C. ground staff, was given his place. Going in No. 7, he scored a brilliant hundred, off-driving the fast bowlers with rare dash. The Gentlemen were a strong batting side, but so well did Braund and Arnold bowl that they were all out for 171, Jackson alone rising superior to the conditions. In the next innings Hesketh-Prichard made the ball fly in all directions, and five of the Players were back in



the pavilion for 49 more; but once more King saved his side, and with another splendid century rivalled "Tip" Foster's record of four years back. The Gentlemen could never have approached their task of getting 412 runs in the last innings had not the wicket on the last morning rolled out better than it had been at any time in the match. Fry and Foster gave them a splendid start, but with both of them and Spooner gone, more than 300 were still wanted. Then Jackson, aided by fortune, and Ranji, playing as only he could, added 194, and victory was high above the horizon, only to sink back again as both those heroes and Jessop were sent back with over 90 still needed. The Players' fielding was of the keenest, and Arnold, for the nonce a fast bowler, gave nothing away; but A. O. Jones and Bosanquet added 55 in forty minutes, and then M. W. Payne helped Jones to add another 37. All seemed over when Payne was run out; McDonell could not bat, owing to an injured thumb, so that Hesketh-Prichard was now the last hope. If no great batsman, he was a man of immense determination, and knew the value of a straight bat. The field closed round him, but for four overs he withstood the assault, until Jones, with two grand off-drives, settled the issue. It was a fitting rejoinder to the Players' performance of 1900.

The Gentlemen put up a moderate showing in 1905, but the Centenary Match that followed provided a fitting celebration. It was pre-eminently a fast bowlers' affair; with the exception of one wicket that fell to J. N. Crawford and one run out, the whole forty were accounted for by three genuine fast bowlers, Knox, Brearley, and Fielder, and by Walter Lees, who was distinctly quicker than medium. The wicket right through the game was what the pavilion critics called sporting; some of the batsmen would perhaps have given it a less appreciative name.

The Gentlemen led off by losing Spooner, H. K. Foster, and Perrin, all clean-bowled by Fielder for some 20 odd runs; Jackson, by determined, and Bosanquet, by adventurous, cricket, pulled the game round; but then Fielder got going again, and ended up by dismissing all ten Gentlemen with his own right arm for 167. There was a break-back every now and again, but it was the ball that went with the arm which did most of the damage. To Amurath succeeded Amurath, or rather a pair of them, in Knox and Brearley, and in somewhere about half an hour four of the best Players had been "shot" for 17 runs. Then Hayward, badly hurt in the first over, came back to play with undaunted courage, and Denton lashed at the rising ball with fine audacity. A typical piece of determined batting by Lilley on the next morning gave the Players a lead of 22. Spooner and Foster then made 156 for the first wicket, Foster fighting hard all the time, but Spooner playing with consummate

grace and fluency. Then Walter Lees, putting on an extra yard of pace, brought about a collapse, and it was left for Walter Brearley to play a wondrous innings of 7 and help Jessop to add 49 in the last half-hour.

The Players had to get 290 to win, and in two overs Knox played skittles with the stumps of Bowley, Tyldesley, and Denton; the three Surreyites, Hayward, Hayes, and Lees, fought hard and knocked Knox off, but he came again for a final effort, and the Gentlemen ran out winners by 45 runs. Fielder's record, the unparalleled assault of Knox and Brearley, the brilliant wicket-keeping of Henry Martyn, who, wearing two pairs of gloves, stood up to both bowlers, Spooner's elegance, Hayward's majestic courage, and the obvious discomfort of some of his colleagues, all these made up an historic match.

A magnificent century by Hayward and a drawn match in 1907 was followed by three hollow victories for the Players, who in the persons of Sydney Barnes, Fielder, Hirst, "Razor" Smith, and Relf possessed deadly agents on any wicket against an opposition which sadly missed the old dominance of the Jam Saheb and Fry, the latter of whom was playing irregularly, the former not at all.

It was time for the amateurs to reassert themselves, and this they proceeded to do in 1911. On the first morning, under by no means easy conditions, and against some magnificent bowling by Barnes, Fry and Warner played splendidly in a partnership of over 100; then Douglas battled with the bowling for more than three hours for an invaluable 72, and F. R. Foster, in wonderful form this year, hit most brilliantly for 69 in just over an hour. Under the circumstances the total of 352 was splendid. In reply, the Players for a time did well enough, but then Douglas and Foster, making the most of a rather fiery wicket, shot out the last six men, to give their side a lead of 150. Fry and Spooner drove home the advantage with a will by making 122 for the first wicket by grand batsmanship, and after an hour's play on the last morning Fry could declare, leaving the Players to get 423. At one point, with the Players 188 for 2 and level with the clock, things looked a little sobering for the amateurs, but then Le Couteur took charge of the game, as he had done of the 'Varsity match a week before in a somewhat similar situation, and the last 8 wickets fell for just over 100 runs. Hobbs batted throughout the innings, and was undefeated for 154, a truly wonderful effort; but first honours of the match went to Douglas, and great were the rejoicings over this unmistakable revival of the Gentlemen's prestige.

Weakened by the absence of Douglas and Foster in 1912, the amateurs did well enough to run their opponents to an even draw, Simms, Kidd, and Greswell, all new to the match, bowling very

well. Hobbs again played a brilliant innings (94), and J. W. Hearne's defence in both innings was very fine. Against some very fast bowling by Hitch, the amateurs began deplorably in their first innings, but on the next day A. C. Johnston made 89 runs on a "bouncing" wicket against Barnes at his best.

The Gentlemen started badly in 1913 to the fine bowling of Barnes and Booth, but then Jessop, originally not selected but pressed into service at the eleventh hour, once again saved them from disaster. He scored 63 from the 58 balls which he received. S. G. Smith, if quieter, also batted admirably, and the total reached 232. The Players scored 50 for the loss of Hobbs's wicket. There was no play at all on Tuesday. On the Wednesday morning Rhodes and Tarrant raised the score to 157, when Jessop ran out Rhodes. From that moment Simms took charge of the game, and on a now difficult pitch ran straight through the rest of the side for another 50 runs. It was now the amateurs' turn for trouble. With Barnes at one end—and he has rarely bowled better—and Tarrant or Woolley at the other, they were helpless, and only a courageous innings by F. R. Foster enabled them just to pass the century. The Players now wanted 123 in an hour and three-quarters, and the wicket was still very difficult. That they got them was due almost entirely to a splendid and undefeated innings of 72 by Hobbs, who alone could tackle Simms.

The last of the games before the war was emphatically Douglas's match. A finer exhibition of endurance, accuracy, and control of the swerve has never been given by a bowler at Lord's, and his final figures of 13 wickets for 172 runs in 56 overs barely reflect his achievement. The Gentlemen began disastrously to Hitch and Barnes, but consistent batting by the second half of the side produced the respectable total of 265. Then came Douglas's great feat of bowling for nearly four hours, taking 9 wickets, and so winning for his side a slender lead. The Gentlemen began well again, under Fry and Hornby, S. G. Smith scored a 50 for the second time in the match, and the Players were faced with the big task of making 285 on a wicket that was anything but plumb. In less than an hour the issue was settled by Douglas and Foster bowling so grandly that 6 wickets actually fell for 28 runs. There was a plucky recovery at the end, but the Players had to haul down their colours to the tune of 134 runs.

#### OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE.

University cricket in this century opened in an orgy of run-getting; the bowling of both sides was admittedly weak in 1900, and when they met at Lord's there never seemed any prospect of a definite finish. Both the Oxford and Cambridge first innings' totals

were records, the aggregate for the match of 1,300 runs for 28 wickets was also a record, and R. E. Foster eclipsed all previous individual efforts by scoring 171 and 42. He had scored most heavily for Oxford all the summer, and his batting at Lord's was the finest that has ever yet been seen in the game, especially his cutting. An acute observer has recorded that in all the three hours he was at the wicket only four balls passed his bat!

There was more heavy scoring in 1901; Cambridge were eventually able to declare, and with the Oxford hitters going for the runs and making some mistakes, Johnson, a highly erratic fast bowler, meeting with unexpected success, and the light none too good, they at one time looked like pulling off the match. But a heroic not out 100 by C. H. B. Marsham saved the Dark Blues.

In 1902 Oxford's batting was mediocre, and they were outplayed and beaten at Lord's. This was the last year of two great Cambridge cricketers in E. R. Wilson and S. H. Day. Both had scored heavily against Oxford, Day playing a beautiful innings of 117 this year, and Wilson a most solid one of 118 in the year before. Moreover, Wilson had bowled with extreme persistency and steadiness in all his four matches, in which he took 19 wickets, and was probably the most accurate bowler who has yet appeared in the game. This year he and Dowson had shouldered the Cambridge attack practically unsupported, and their bowling determined the issue at Lord's.

E. M. Dowson went down a year later, after a career in which he had somewhat disappointed his extraordinary promise as a bowler at Harrow, but had developed into a magnificent batsman, strong in defence, and a superb driver, especially of fast bowling. In 1903 Oxford won for the first time since 1898; Raphael, an eleventh-hour choice, made 130 at the start of the match, but it was the Oxford fast bowlers, Martin, Von Ernsthause, and W. H. B. Evans who settled the result.

Evans was possibly the finest all-round cricketer that has ever appeared for Oxford. Like Dowson, he combined first-rate back-play with brilliant driving powers, especially on the off-side, whilst as a fast-medium bowler he had a perfect action and both break and swing at his command. It has been well said that, given the temperament and opportunity, he might have done anything, but his real heroes were Handel and William Pitt, and cricket was to him never more than a pastime. In this year, 1903, he took 11 Cambridge wickets, but in the next year it was his batting (65 and 86 not out) that saved his side. Cambridge should have won, but their captain, F. B. Wilson, delayed his declaration to allow Marsh to beat Foster's record score, and when Oxford looked like going down Cambridge missed catches, and Evans played magnificently, with complete indifference for the century that he could easily have got. Marsh, a man of twenty-nine, played very soundly, and his

off-driving was first-rate. McDonell bowled his leg-breaks for Cambridge with great success.

In 1905 began the series of three successive Light Blue victories which will always be associated with the names of Napier and Morcom, on performance in the match the best pair of University bowlers since Jackson and Woods. In the three years they together took 47 wickets out of the 60 that fell! Both bowled over medium pace at a fine length, and whereas Napier specialized in the "going-away" ball, Morcom, bowling from the pavilion end at Lord's, broke back very sharply. The latter, in particular, in this his freshman's year, bowled splendidly against Oxford, but the most sensational rôle in the match was played by two Cambridge batsmen. At the end of the first innings Oxford led by 101 runs, thanks entirely to Raphael and Wright; the latter, a freshman from Winchester, made 95, and it was bad luck when an impossible ball from Napier bowled Raphael at 99, and so prevented him from equalling Yardley's feat of scoring two centuries in the University match. The wicket was now showing signs of going, and Evans, bowling with any amount of devil, got 4 wickets at once and Udal another. Half Cambridge were out for 44, and 6 of them for 77. Then McDonell joined Colbeck. Twenty runs were added by a mixture of ill-fortune for the Oxford bowlers and impudent strokes by Colbeck, and then Evans wrenched the heel of his boot loose and had to go off. That accident cost Oxford the match. McDonell began to hit, and Colbeck to hit harder; but whereas the former was reasonably orthodox, Colbeck defied every law, cutting off the middle stump and slash-hitting wide off-balls over the fieldsmen's heads to the boundary. When McDonell went for 60, the pair had added 143; Colbeck went on to complete one of the most memorable hundreds in the whole history of the match, and Oxford, instead of winning by an innings, needed to get 164. Moreover, thanks to the Cambridge captain's tactics, they had half an hour's batting to face at the end of a distinctly demoralizing afternoon. In that time they lost 3 wickets for 15, and on the next morning Napier and Morcom took charge. McDonell caught Evans marvellously at slip, and Cambridge got home by 40 runs. But it was Colbeck's match.

In 1906 the game opened in a blaze of fireworks. Off the first two overs from Udal, the Oxford fast bowler, M. W. Payne, scored 34 runs, and when he was caught at mid-on he had actually made 64 runs out of 73, and that 64 in half an hour. Young, one of the very soundest of all University batsmen, then went on to make 150, Colbeck made some more audacious strokes, and the Cambridge total of 360 soon proved to be a winning one, in spite of a brilliant second innings by Geoffrey Foster.

The next game was played on a wet wicket, in which the ball altogether mastered the bat. Oxford were a poor side, but with one

really clever bowler in H. A. Gilbert, who troubled his opponents sorely in their first innings, and Cambridge had to fight hard before they got home. Young played the best innings of the match, and at the crisis Buchanan hit with courage, if some luck. But it was once again a case of Napier and Morcom, to whom fell 18 out of the 20 Oxford wickets.

The 1908 match was the first of three Oxford victories, interrupted only by a draw in 1909. It was fought in broken weather on a pitch that gave the bowlers varying degrees of help. When, in the last innings, Oxford needed to score 183, a final storm which left the pitch dead easy and the ball like soap assisted them to victory by two wickets.

In the next match the rain, which prevented play on the second afternoon, may well have saved Cambridge from defeat, for after a splendid opening partnership between Salter and A. J. Evans had laid the foundations of a respectable Dark Blue total, Gilbert's bowling secured for his side a lead of over 80. But Oxford contributed largely to the result by failing to force the game on the last morning and giving themselves no real chance of a win. By far the most successful of the Cambridge bowlers was Lockhart, the slowest bowler yet seen in the match, who tossed up his high leg-breaks with great perseverance, varying them with an occasional top-spinner.

This was the first of Johnny Evans's four years in the side. A somewhat uncertain starter with the bat, his method, once he got going, was classical and impressive. With a new ball he was always a dangerous bowler, but he made a mistake in sacrificing spin to swing.

1910 was "Le Couteur's year," and in the history of this match there is no parallel to his great all-round performance. A Rhodes scholar from Melbourne University, Le Couteur was a year or two older than the average undergraduate; getting his "blue" as a freshman in the previous year, he had done modestly well, but in the following season he virtually carried the Oxford attack on his own shoulders, and his record of 59 wickets for 14 each in the season has not often been bettered. He bowled a shade quicker than slow, varied a pronounced leg-break with an admirably disguised googly, and was very clever at alternating the tossed-up spinner with the ball of flatter trajectory that went straight through. In batting he was no stylist, but a resourceful player particularly good at hitting the breaking ball to the on-boundary, in doing which he preferred to lift it over the in-fields' heads.

The match at Lord's opened with an unqualified sensation. The wicket was wet, and Cowie, a really fast bowler, could not get a foothold, with the result that his first two balls were wides, and the third a high full pitch to leg, which Evans mishit and skied to

slip. The next, also a full pitch, yielded a single, the fifth clean bowled Sale, and off the last ball everyone on the ground, except the umpire, thought that Salter was caught at the wicket. Four wickets were down for 30, but then Hooman played finely, and with the Cambridge bowling rapidly deteriorating, Le Couteur hit it almost as he liked, before being caught at mid-off for 160.

On the next day the wicket was far from easy, and the Light Blues could do nothing with the googlies. A first innings total of 76 was followed by a second of 113; Evans accelerated the finish with a sensational little piece of bowling which took the last 4 wickets for 7 runs; but Le Couteur's record for the match was 11 for 66!

Next year the 'Varsities once more met on a fast true wicket, and a thoroughly interesting game it was. Both sides were strong in batting, of an attractive rather than solid order. Cambridge had two fine all-round players in Falcon and Ireland, both of whom had developed remarkably as bowlers of pace; but Oxford still had the one really match-winning factor in Le Couteur, and in the end he settled the issue. The features of the first innings were the steady defence of Twining, one of the soundest of Eton batsmen, the fine hitting of Bardsley, and a hat-trick by Ireland. Cambridge headed Oxford by 4 runs, and got 5 wickets down in the second innings for little more than 100; then the three hat-trick victims all got runs, Henry Brougham playing brilliantly for 84, and the Oxford total reached 328, a really fine recovery. Collins, a New Zealander and the last instance of a genuine "double Blue" in the original sense of the Boat and the Eleven, once more proved himself a thoroughly good batsman, but once Le Couteur got down to work there could be only one answer. The googly, well bowled, was rather outside the calculations of the pre-war undergraduate. The Oxford fielding throughout the game was up to the very highest standard, whilst Saville, the Cambridge cover, was very brilliant indeed.

In 1912 Cambridge had their revenge. This year they were captained by E. L. Kidd, a fine tactician and one of the best of Cambridge all-rounders. The success of his leg-breaks and his eminently sound batting in each innings was largely responsible for the result, though the outstanding feature in the decisive fourth innings was the batting of Mulholland, whose left-handed driving recalled memories of Francis Ford. On the Oxford side there were many batting failures, but Crutchley's 99 not out must always rank as historic. None too well on the Monday morning, it was only after serious debate that it was decided that he could play. Not out for a few runs at luncheon, he spent the interval prostrated in the dressing-room, and when he left it to bat his face was the colour of an over-ripe mulberry, and his temperature obviously high. A few hours later he was out of the match for good, and in bed with

a bad attack of measles, but not before he had given a display of off-driving that will be forgotten by none who saw it.

The younger Lagden had the lion's share in the Cambridge victory of 1913, when his enterprise, aided by some fortune, triumphed over a somewhat difficult wicket. Scoring was modest throughout, and the bowling of Melle and J. H. Naumann always good. The former had had great success for Oxford with his in-swingers, whilst the latter, an eleventh-hour choice, bowled his left-hand medium pace most accurately. A splendid innings by Bardsley at Oxford's second attempt promised a great match, but the tail collapsed, and Lagden's hitting and Kidd's steadiness landed their side safely home.

In the last year before the War Oxford had one batsman of real class in D. J. Knight, supported by a fair body of sturdy, if not particularly graceful, batting. Their attack, however, was definitely weak except for Bristowe, a freshman, who bowled leg-spinners and an occasional googly, with a lot of life and commendable accuracy. Cambridge, with eleven old Blues in residence, were expected to be a fine side, but somehow they never really settled down, and possibly the best use was not made of the material available. Up to the evening of the second day the sides proved well matched, but it rained half the night, and on a really difficult wicket in the fourth innings Cambridge had no chance, and Bristowe and Naumann shot them out summarily. The best innings of the match was clearly Knight's 64, but Knott, the Oxford captain, played finely in the second innings, when his team were in some difficulty. Morrison and Wood were the only Cambridge men to increase their reputation.

#### THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

In 1900 Harrow could look back to a long spell of ascendancy, for in three years only in the last twenty-five had they tasted defeat. They continued their winning sequence for the first three years of the new century, thanks mainly to their marked strength in batting, with Eyre, Mann, and Carlisle, three subsequent University captains, playing the leading part.

In 1903, however, the tide turned with a vengeance, Eton winning in that and the following year by over an innings. They had now struck a rich vein of batting. There were three stylists in Crankshaw, who made a century against Harrow in 1903, and subsequently lost an arm in the War; P. F. C. Williams, later captain of Gloucestershire, and a rare off-driver; and K. I. Nicholl, the latter a really beautiful player as a boy, who scored very heavily against Harrow and Winchester alike. In the 1904 match Boles, a powerful hitter, ran up the huge total of 183, which still holds the



field for this event, and the last 83 runs took him but half an hour!

Such batting must surely have saved Eton from defeat, and their fielding was brilliant, especially in the case of Guy Campbell, one of the finest "covers" seen in the match; but it was the left-hand bowling of C. E. Hatfield that spelt victory. In his four matches at Lord's he accounted for 30 Harrow wickets, but he never again reached the level of his first performance in 1904—12 wickets for 91.

In 1905 Eton, left with three and a half hours in which to get 216 runs in their last innings, played for a draw and came very near defeat. Their two last batsmen had to survive over half an hour: survive they did, but twice during that time were the stumps hit without the bails being removed.

Eton won again in 1906, and in Pearson-Gregory (90 and 45) they had a batsman who, had he chosen, might have rivalled the best in her history. Michael Falcon, another of Harrow's long line of Cambridge captains, also batted splendidly, and Morice Bird, hitherto too impetuous with the bat, did well with the ball.

1907 was "Bird's year," and his wonderful hitting for his double century (131 and 100) will be remembered as long as the match lasts; but the Eton captain, Benson, played almost as well, and it was not until ten minutes from time that Harrow triumphed, when their wicket-keeper, Arthur Lang, covered himself with glory by catching the last three men—the final batsman on the leg-side! Then followed two matches played on wet wickets, when most of the batting on both sides was very mediocre. The first was won by Harrow, one might almost say by Crutchley, who played a beautiful innings of 74 and took 8 wickets for 46—a wonderful "double" for his first year in the side. The second was drawn, and though Crutchley again bowled well, it was "Bob" Fowler who, with 11 wickets for 79, foreshadowed the drama to come.

Inasmuch as there can never be a finer game of cricket than the Eton and Harrow match of 1910, I propose to cast proportion to the winds and describe it in some detail.

The wicket throughout the match was soft, and the ball turned, but the best authorities seem agreed that it was never genuinely sticky. When Harrow, who won the toss, had made 232, they had every reason to feel pleased with themselves. The light was bad on the first evening, and caused an early ending, but the Eton batting was worse, 5 wickets being lost for 40 runs.

Next day the innings was soon ended for a paltry 67, Fowler alone showing any form. Eton duly followed on, and very shortly after luncheon half their wickets were again down, for 65, and they were still 100 behind. Then came the first tentative counter-attack, Wigan, a really good player, helping his captain to add 42.

It was followed by a second of a more determined kind when Boswell joined Fowler, and by courageous hitting the pair increased the total by 57 in just over forty minutes. But Fowler went at last, for a splendid 64, and Boswell and the next man soon followed, leaving the last pair together with Eton a mere boundary ahead. Of the two, Lister-Kaye was admittedly a rustic batsman, but he had an eye. Manners was not a great cricketer, but he was a racket player, quick in decision and movement, utterly fearless, and of a stock that loved a crisis. Perhaps it was the very desperateness of their situation that inspired the two Etonians, but certain it is that they took the Harrow bowling by the scruff of the neck and hit it all over Lord's; Manners made some glorious drives off Earle's fast bowling, and in twenty-three minutes 50 runs were added before an acrobatic catch in the slips brought the fireworks to an end.

There are some who maintain to this day that Harrow lost the match by having the heavy roller put on the wicket before their last innings, but as there was little or no sun to affect it afterwards, this can hardly have been the case. Fowler, from the pavilion end, clean bowled Wilson with his very first ball; Hopley hit two fours, and was also clean bowled, and at the same total Turnbull was perfectly caught by Boswell by the pavilion rails—3 for 8. Earle might very well finish the match in a quarter of an hour, and looked like doing so; but after knocking up 13 in no time, he fell to a catch, very low down at slip, about which some Harrovians to this day have unprintable views. Two more wickets fell immediately, and now, as a result of half an hour's play, 5 were down for 21, Jameson, who had gone in first, having not yet scored a run.

The moral balance had utterly shifted and the offensive was now with Eton. Blount made 5 before giving Steel an easy catch and bowl; there was a bye, Straker scraped a single, and then Fowler bowled him all over his wicket. Jameson's total was still at 0 when Graham joined him, and at this point he was rather badly hurt and the game delayed. When he had recovered, he opened his scoring with a 2, after being at the wicket nearly fifty minutes and watching agonizedly the tragic procession at the other end. Graham was playing with sense and extreme determination, and if he could only stay the game might still be saved; but Fowler, sensing a possible crisis, found a ball to beat and bowl Jameson, and 9 wickets were down for 32.

It was all over, thought Eton; but not so thought Graham and Alexander, who, encouraged by frenzied cheers from all Harrovians, set their teeth and added 13 runs. Then Steel made one of his leg-breaks go down the hill a little quicker than usual, Alexander touched it, and the game was over.

In that innings Fowler bowled unchanged for just over an hour,

and his final figures were 8 for 23. If ever a man, by prowess and personality alike, won victory for his side, it was he, and no match in history can illumine more brilliantly the great principle that "a game is never lost until it is won."

The last four of the matches prior to the War all fell to Eton, and were notable for the brutal efficiency of the later Eton batsmen, whose powerful hitting, both in 1912 and 1913, quite demoralized the Harrow bowlers after none too favourable a start. Wigan and Colman in 1911 had both played admirably, on more orthodox lines. These years saw also a succession of fast bowlers, who thrived on the rather fiery wickets of Agar's Plough, and made a considerable mark for themselves at Lord's.

But though Eton were victorious in these years before the War, some at least of the honours went to Harrow. In the 1912 match, after being 150 behind on the first innings, they fought so well that, largely thanks to Blount (137), they put Eton in to get 144, and only capitulated twelve minutes from time. In the last two years everything else from the Harrow standpoint is dwarfed by the heroic batting of Geoffrey Wilson, whose last three scores in the great match were 173, 65, and 58.

Until the War their encounters with Eton continued to be Winchester's solitary school match, an undesirable arrangement which has since been satisfactorily altered. In the first four years of the century the two schools played four very well-contested games, of which the first was drawn and the next three won by Eton, but by small margins. The weather was generally wet, and the scoring ruled low. Of individual performances, the pick is obviously Sandeman's, a left-hand swerving bowler, who in 1902 took 16 Winchester wickets for 46 (all 10 in the first innings for 22)! But Winchester had two really good all-round cricketers in H. C. McDonell and A. C. Johnston, both of whom rose to real distinction in later years.

In 1904 the Winchester Eleven went through the season unbeaten, defeated Eton by 8 wickets, and had strong claims to be considered the best school side of the year, and among the best of the last half-century. In the first place, they were ably led by E. L. Wright, who had celebrated his entry into the Winchester side two years before by playing a splendid innings of 113 against Eton, and had now become an exceptional school batsman, with a temperament that always brought out his best when it was most wanted, and there were other fine batsmen, in Bruce, Teesdale, Gordon, and Evans, all of whom averaged over 35 for the season. In the great match both sides scored well in the first innings, but Younger and Evans proved too much for all the Etonians, save Astor, in the second, and Wright finished off the match with a

brilliant 50, Winchester obtaining the necessary 130 runs for 2 wickets in ninety minutes.

Then followed two draws, and then another Winchester win, in which Parke, a batsman of tender years and positively diminutive size, covered himself with glory in both innings. This was, however, the last time Winchester tasted victory down to the outbreak of war, though they had shocking luck both in 1908 and 1912, when disease and an accident respectively robbed them of their captains, that splendid player, A. J. Evans, and a really fine bowler in Critchley-Salmonson.

For a few years at the start of this century Repton cricket was exceptionally strong, and in J. N. Crawford they had, in my view, the greatest school cricketer of all time. A medium-paced bowler of beautiful action, great accuracy, and every possible device, a batsman of extraordinary power but classic method, and a magnificent field in any position, he dominated during his last two years every school match in which he took part, and appeared what indeed he was, a first-class cricketer playing in a class below him. I am tempted to record his performances in the school matches of those years and his aggregate figures for each:—

- 1904—759 runs, average 54; *v.* Malvern, 37 and 64 and 13 wickets.  
 75 wickets, average 12; *v.* Uppingham, 18 and 9 wickets.  
 1905—766 runs, average 85; *v.* Malvern, 139 and 10 wickets.  
 51 wickets, average 12; *v.* Uppingham, 163 and 10 wickets.

In August 1904, a year before he left school, Crawford appeared for Surrey, scored 54 in his first match, and ended the season with 44 wickets to his credit for 16; in the following August he took only just short of 50 wickets and averaged 45 as a batsman for Surrey; whilst in the season after leaving Repton he made 1,000 runs, took 100 wickets, and played for the Gentlemen at Lord's.

If Crawford was necessarily the outstanding figure at Repton, he had some worthy colleagues. In 1903 and 1904 the side was captained by R. A. Young, an excellent wicket-keeper, and one of the soundest of batsmen, who subsequently captained Cambridge and went to Australia with the M.C.C. The batting was very strong right down the order; and the bowling, with A. F. Morcom and a really good left-hander in each of the years, would have been formidable even without its protagonist. In 1905 Crawford was captain, and could have carried a weak side on his shoulders; but he had strong support, with the result that Repton annihilated both Malvern and Uppingham, and went through the year unbeaten. Three years later the school again turned out an eleven which was, at the time, proclaimed as fine a side as had ever done duty for a Public School. That is a large order, but it was certainly of exceptional strength, with abundance of batting, fine fielding, and two splendid bowlers in W. T. Greswell and Vidler. Of that eleven five

won "blues," Greswell played for the Gentlemen, and A. T. Sharp developed into one of the soundest of amateur batsmen; moreover, in the August after leaving school, Greswell bowled with great success for Somerset, Sharp played for Leicestershire, Sale for Derbyshire, I for Surrey, whilst Campbell and Cardew were each asked to play for their counties, but could not do so.

Just before the War Repton produced two more remarkable batsmen in the brothers Howell. The elder, Miles, subsequently won high distinction at Oxford, but the younger, John, was the greater stylist, a masterly player on difficult wickets, whose death in action in 1915 surely robbed England of a great batsman.

If they had somewhat the worse of the exchange with Repton in this period, Malvern nevertheless turned out several fine sides. W. H. B. Evans was an outstanding all-round player, and, if there were no other bowlers of class in the period, their batting was so consistently strong that they were always very hard to beat. Moreover, in Evans, the younger Fosters, A. P. Day, Mann, Prest and the Naumanns, the Malvern style inculcated by Charles Toppin was brilliantly revealed in its élan and beautiful repertoire of off-side strokes. Of this style, D. J. Knight, who appeared for Malvern in the first match of his first summer term, played in all five years, made nearly 3,000 runs for the school, and averaged for the whole period a little short of 50, was never really typical, but in defence, resource, and ease of play he was a very great school batsman.

Uppingham never approached the standard of their greatest days under the ægis of H. H., but in Clayton Palmer and Hurst they had two splendid batsmen, the former winning great glory in 1904 with an innings of 216 in two and a half hours, which won the match against Haileybury and time.

Charterhouse had three very strong elevens in 1902, 1906, and 1911. In the first year the great men were Branston, Curwen, and Norris, and the first-named, in particular, must have been a terror, judging by his performance that year in the House Cup, when in four innings he scored 184, 146, 213, and 147! No less formidable, in 1906, were the giant Buchanan, later captain of Cambridge; Gilbert, a very clever medium-paced bowler, who was reserve for a Test Match in 1909; and Hooman, a magnificent forcing batsman with an average of 85 in his last year at school.

Of those two old rivals, Rugby and Marlborough, the former had a little the better of the exchanges, and made rather a habit of winning when they were most expected to lose. At the very beginning of the century they had undoubtedly the best school batsman of the year in E. W. Dillon, who averaged 40 that August for Kent, but subsequently their strength was collective rather than individual, even if J. L. Bryan in the years just before the War

clearly forecast his future powers. For Marlborough in the early years G. G. Napier did well, without quite suggesting his Cambridge triumphs; but probably the best of the school's sides were seen in 1908, which included that splendid athlete and charming personality, the late R. O. Lagden.

Cheltenham were strong in 1902, and again in 1906 and 1907, and in the year of the War, when they were unbeaten; but the middle period was their best, when they could point to a really good all-round player in R. T. H. Mackenzie and a sterling batsman in M. G. Salter.

Clifton, too, were strong in 1914. Whitehead, another victim of the War, who had two years before compiled the record Clifton score of 259 in a school match, was now a wonderfully sound bat, and completed his 2,000th run for the school in his last match, at Lord's. Morgan, with a record of 66 wickets for 9 each, was an exceptional left-hand bowler.

Tonbridge produced two splendid batsmen in K. L. Hutchings and F. H. Knott, and were in 1908 a strong side, which owed much to the all-round performances of Bourdillon. Of the two, Hutchings, of course, attained by far the greater fame; but nothing he did at school equalled Knott's record for 1910, when he totalled over 1,100 runs, made six centuries, and, stepping into the Kent Eleven in August, ran up 114 in his third county match, and scored consistently in almost every innings.

This feat of scoring 1,000 runs in a school season, at one time undreamt of, had twice been accomplished in 1901, by C. D. McIver, for Forest, and by J. E. Raphael, for Merchant Taylors. In 1901 Felsted can point to their one great champion, John Douglas, for whom county cricket in the last year of his school days was not too high a trial; whilst Dulwich, where the wickets rather favoured fast bowling, produced N. A. Knox, and, just before the War, Arthur Gilligan.

## CHAPTER XXV

### SOUTH AFRICAN CRICKET

CRICKET entered South Africa at the heels of the English soldier, missionary, and schoolmaster. A year after our first occupation of Natal, 1843, the 45th Foot were playing the game at Pietermaritzburg; a few summers later the British settlers at Bloemfontein had started a club, and before the end of the sixties matches between "Mother Country" and "Colonial Born" had become recognized and eagerly awaited events. Kimberley took up the game in the next decade, and there is a charming picture of a team of Kimberley Veterans in 1878, dressed strictly *à la* Alfred Mynn, in white top-hats, stiff collars, and bow-ties! But the original home of South African cricket was, of course, in the Western Province, where the English element was strongest. As early as 1864 a Western Province Cricket Club was founded, and its matches, first at Rondebosch and later at Wynberg, were very social functions, regularly enlivened by a military band, and often graced by the presence of the Governor and his staff.

For twenty years more, however, the standard and experience of the country's cricket remained provincial, until in the winter of 1888-1889 the enterprise of Major Warton and of Sir Donald Currie, the founder of the Castle Line, led to the first visit of an English team. This eleven was captained by the subsequently well-known actor, "Round-the-Corner" Smith: its standard was about that of a weak county, but it proved fully strong enough for the purpose in view. The great majority of the fixtures were easily won, and in the two Test Matches—the only games not played against odds—South Africa was annihilated. The batting of Abel, the wicket-keeping of Bowden and Wood, and, above all, the bowling of Johnny Briggs, was a revelation to the South Africans. Briggs especially had an extraordinary tour, taking only just short of 300 wickets for 5 apiece, and in one match dismissing twenty-seven batsmen for 23 runs! But though defeated, the Africans learnt many lessons, and the tour left them an invaluable legacy in the person of Frank Hearne, who, at its close, remained behind on a coaching engagement, the first of a long line of English professionals to follow his example.

Three years later Walter Read took out a very strong combination which went through the country undefeated. Only one Test Match was played, and in this the home team were completely overwhelmed, the bowling of Ferris playing a decisive part, as, indeed, it did throughout the tour.

In the summer of 1894 a South African team for the first time visited England. The tour excited little interest over here, most of the fixtures being against second-class sides, and proved a financial failure. But our visitors gained invaluable experience, had the satisfaction of beating by 11 runs quite a strong M.C.C. team, captained by W. G., at Lord's, and proved that in E. A. Halliwell they could at least boast a wicket-keeper the equal of any in England. The value of this enterprise was fully proved two winters later, when Lord Hawke, that "Odysseus of Cricket," took out a strong and attractive side to the Cape. The bowling of Lohmann, the batting of C. B. Fry, A. J. L. Hill, and Hayward were the features of our cricket; but though all three of the Test Matches were easily won, it was clear that the standard of South African cricket had sensibly advanced, and the visitors formed a high opinion of the ability of two young cricketers, J. H. Sinclair and C. B. Llewellyn.

Coinciding as they did with the Jameson Raid, our men had some curious experiences. They were hurriedly summoned to Johannesburg to distract local attention from political issues, were held up on their way by an armed posse of Boers, from whom, however, by presenting two bats, they parted excellent friends, and on arrival at the Rand saw Cronje march through with his victorious commandos, and dined with the English "prisoners."

By this time the stimulus of the "Currie Cup" inter-province tournament was making itself felt, and when Lord Hawke returned with another strong side, in 1898, it was to find a further marked improvement in South African cricket.

The outbreak of the Boer War naturally put an end for a time to all organized cricket in the Cape, and it is really somewhat surprising to find that the next South African side to visit England actually sailed before hostilities were concluded. This tour was under the ægis of the Hon. J. D. Logan, the second of the three great patrons of their cricket, and was managed by George Lohmann, who was at that time living at Magersfontein in the tragically unsuccessful attempt to repair his shattered health. It was unfortunate that the team should have met some of their strongest opponents at the very outset of the tour, long before they had grown accustomed to English conditions: the result was a sequence of defeats and a rapid evaporation of public interest; but by the end of July they were playing well, and would have been a good match for most county sides.

To the personality of their captain, Murray Bisset, they owed



in great measure the happy unity of the team. Hathorn played many splendid innings, including a contribution of 239 to the mammoth total of 692 compiled against Cambridge University. Shalders and Louis Tancred both did well with the bat, and Rowe captured 136 wickets. But the outstanding figures on the side were Sinclair, Kostze, and Halliwell. Sinclair, by this time grown to the full stature of his magnificent manhood, never quite reached his best batting form, though he played some wonderful cricket at times, and hit Rhodes so far out of the Harrogate ground as to knock a cabby off his cab; but his bowling was extremely good. Making the most of his great height, he could both turn and "flight" the ball, having profited, in the latter art especially, from the coaching of its great master. Lohmann. Kostze astonished England by his pace, and it was generally agreed that no faster bowler, saving only Kortright, had yet been seen. But the greatest admiration was reserved for Halliwell, now something of a veteran, but surpassing even his own previous form behind the stumps. The sight of him standing up to Kostze's terrific bowling was a revelation to English cricketers, and when he stumped two Kent batsmen off successive fast "yorkers" on the leg-side, his fame resounded through the land.

The experience acquired by the South Africans on this trip was further increased in the following winter by a visit from Darling's 1902 Australian side. That great eleven rapidly adapted themselves to the vagaries of matting, and won comfortably enough the two Test Matches that were finished, but only after their opponents had given them a real shock in the first by batting splendidly and leaving off with by no means the worst of the draw. Sinclair further increased his reputation by some wonderful hitting, and scored three centuries against the visitors. The South Africans have admitted themselves how deeply they were impressed by the batting of Trumper and Hill, and how valuable was the lesson they learnt from the strenuousness and intensity of the whole Australian side.

In 1904 Frank Mitchell, who had stayed behind in South Africa on the conclusion of Lord Hawke's last tour, took over to England the third team to visit us from that country. Reinforced by excellent all-round players in Gordon White and R. O. Schwarz, this was certainly a stronger combination than its predecessors, and in a programme of twenty-six fixtures, the great majority first-class, it was only defeated three times. Mitchell had wisely arranged for three weeks' practice on their arrival in England, and this proved of the greatest service. He himself, Tancred, and Hathorn did very well with the bat, Kostze bowled faster, and Halliwell "kept," if possible, better than ever. Sinclair was again a very sound bowler, but the feature of the tour, at least for those with a prophetic eye, was the success of Schwarz.

Educated at St. Paul's School, Schwarz had for a year or two been playing in the Middlesex Eleven just at the time when Bosanquet was perfecting his ever-famous "googly." Though himself a fastish bowler, he had watched this sensational process, and, without saying anything to anybody, had started experimenting on the same lines himself. The sight of him thus engaged at the nets during their third match, against Cambridge, afforded his South African comrades undisguised amusement, and greater still was their entertainment when, in the last innings of the next game, at Oxford, Schwarz was told to bowl. Half an hour later the laugh was with the bowler, who in seven overs had taken 5 wickets for 27 runs, and seen some extremely mystified Oxonians returning to the pavilion. From that beginning Schwarz never really looked back: by the end of the tour he had taken 96 wickets for 14 apiece, and when he returned to South Africa it was to pass on his art to others, and so prepare the way for a rude awakening to English cricket.

Encouraged by the success of their first Australian venture, the M.C.C. in 1905 sent out a team under the captaincy of P. F. Warner to the Cape. It was a good side, and no one for a moment doubted its adequacy for the task in hand, but they were routed "horse, foot, and guns." The first Test Match, played on the famous Wanderers' ground at Johannesburg, on which South Africans have always been seen at their best, proved a terrific struggle. Leading by 93 runs on the first innings, the M.C.C. for a time looked perfectly secure; indeed, when they had got 6 enemy wickets down and 179 runs still in hand, the game seemed as good as won. It was then that Gordon White was joined by Nourse. White was in wonderful form this season, and a beautiful off-side player on a fast wicket; while Nourse, a left-hander, now for the first time displayed that rock-like solidity and splendid nerve that was to win him so much success in many a tussle with our bowlers. Together these two men added 121 runs, and then the pendulum swung over with a jerk, first White, and then Vogler and Schwarz being shot out for a further 18.

With 45 still wanted, and amid a silence that could be felt, South Africa's new captain, Percy Sherwell, came out to join Nourse. Sherwell was a great wicket-keeper, a worthy successor to Halliwell, and a magnificent taker of "googly" bowling. As a batsman he subsequently proved himself of a high class, but it was a terrible trial that faced him in this his very first international match. Never did captain rise to the occasion more coolly. The bowling of Lees, Blythe, and Crawford was steadiness itself, and the fielding admirable, but steadily the runs came. With 8 wanted, Sherwell edged Crawford's fast ball between first and second slip for 4: then Nourse got Relf away to fine leg for a 3, and the match was a tie, and finally

Relf delivered up a full pitch to Sherwell, who banged it to the square-leg boundary.

By that stroke history was made: South Africa had beaten England, and the whole ground went wild with delight. But even then it is unlikely that either they or their opponents visualized what was to come. Two months later, on the same ground, they defeated us twice more, and this time with the greatest ease. The rubber was now theirs, but just to leave no shadow of doubt about their superiority, they added a further victory—and that by over an innings—on the Newlands ground, Cape Town, where English cricketers have always hoped to be seen at their best. It was the “googly” that undid us. Men who have played Schwarz, Vogler, Faulkner, and White on the fast matting wicket of the Wanderers’ ground are almost unanimous in describing it as the severest test they have ever known.

Schwarz, the most successful of them all, was unlike the rest in that he bowled the googly and nothing else. The sophisticated of to-day may judge that he should therefore have been relatively easy to play, but, if so, they can never have seen him in his prime. The amount of work he got on to the ball was extraordinary, and off the matting in South Africa, or on a sticky wicket at home, the ball would jump up and across the wicket, almost as if it were alive. Vogler and Gordon White were very sparingly used on this tour, but Faulkner’s off and leg breaks baffled detection. The truth was that our batsmen were hopelessly at sea against them. Fane, relying, it is significant to notice, largely on forward play, was much the most successful, but the all-round honours of the tour clearly went to J. N. Crawford: he had only left Repton in the previous summer, but he was second in the batting averages with an aggregate of over 1,000 runs, and headed the bowling with 91 wickets for 10 each!

After such a triumph the M.C.C. could no longer deny to South Africa the right to meet England on level terms, and when they again visited us in 1907 three Test Matches were arranged. Before ever the first was reached the tourists had convinced even the most sceptical that they had to be taken very seriously indeed.

Unfortunately for South Africa, July 1st, the date of the “First Test,” found a beautiful fast wicket at Lord’s, and a very strong England Eleven in fine batting trim. Braund collected a sedate 100, Jessop a devastating 93, and with others also scoring well, the total reached was 428. Against this the tourists, over-anxious to do themselves justice, collapsed sadly, only Nourse and Faulkner making anything of a show, and when, in the “follow-on,” Hirst bowled Shalders for 0, defeat stared them in the face. It was then that their captain, Sherwell, began to play one of the great innings of cricket history. In an hour and a half, by the most brilliant

hitting imaginable, he had reached his century, and if South Africa was not on terms, the credit of her cricket was re-established. Rain made a blank of the third day.

The second match, at Leeds, was a really thrilling affair. Once again rain interfered with the play, and the game was fought out in exciting interludes on a difficult wicket. From the start it was obvious that the South African bowlers under such conditions were going to put our batting to a most severe test. Thanks to some masterly batting by Hayward, England made a fair start, but after luncheon Faulkner took complete charge of the game, and in little over an hour 9 wickets fell for 42 runs, all the batsmen, except Hirst, being completely baffled by his length and disguised break.

Facing a total of only 76, the South Africans had themselves to battle hard, for Blythe was at his best; indeed, had not a catch or two gone astray, they might have done no better than ourselves; as it was, Sherwell and Shalders hit well, and gave their side a lead of 34.

In the end Africa wanted only 129 runs to win, and there was but one man in the English team to stop them. Fortunately Blythe rose to the occasion, and in one of the greatest pieces of bowling ever seen, went right through the innings and won us the match by 53 runs. In the two innings he took 15 wickets for 99 runs, a feat never equalled in a Test Match in England. He scarcely bowled a bad ball in the three days, and at the finish was so exhausted by the intense nervous strain that for a time he was quite knocked up.

The third Test at the Oval ended in a draw, considerably in England's favour; but had it not been for a wonderful innings of 129 by Charles Fry against some extremely fine bowling, anything might have happened. The South African batting showed up in a better light, and Snooke played two admirable innings.

If unsuccessful, then, in beating England, the tour showed results far in advance of anything yet achieved, for in 31 matches only 4 were lost and 21 won outright. The South African bowling was definitely the talk of the year, and was made the subject of a special and extremely interesting article in *Wisden*, from the pen of the English captain R. E. Foster. In it he records the opinion, shared, we now know, by Sherwell, that the wet season helped the googly even more than it handicapped the African batting. It is interesting, too, to find so fine a judge speculating rather apprehensively upon the future influence of the "new bowling" upon general batting methods, and wondering, all too prophetically, whether it might not militate against their attractiveness and enterprise.

Of the great bowling quartet he singles out Vogler as the best, "perhaps the best bowler in the world"; but Schwarz actually

had a big lead in the bowling table, and White and Faulker were scarcely less difficult.

Finally, it may be said that the whole African team endeared themselves to all they met; they were a splendid-looking set of men, and, as *Wisden* remarked at the close of their tour, "they treated cricket as a game, not as a business, and played it on all occasions in the best possible spirit."

The M.C.C. side sent to South Africa under Leveson-Gower's captaincy in 1909 failed to improve on the performances of Warner's, losing the first three Tests on matting-on-sand before Blythe came into his own on the matting-on-turf. Simpson-Hayward's lobs, a strange phenomenon to his opponents, had previously proved our most dangerous weapon, while Hobbs's first experience of the mat provided a perfect illustration of the way real genius in cricket can adapt itself to any conditions.

The honours of war were unmistakably South Africa's; above all, they fell to Faulkner and Vogler, who together took 65 of the 85 wickets that fell in the Test Matches, and, except to Hobbs, were a perpetual nightmare. Faulkner had now also become a very great batsman, rather stiff and cramped perhaps at the start of an innings, but a master of footwork and watchful defence, and one of the greatest exploiters of the "hook" that ever lived. In fact he was at this time just about the greatest all-round cricketer in the world.

In the following winter the South Africans paid their first visit to Australia, who were at this time at the very summit of their batting strength. The result was a positive orgy of run-getting; but as the Africans occasionally failed, the Australians never, the latter won four out of the five representative games. As those who knew it best had prophesied, the "googly" possessed few terrors on the "shirt-front" wickets of Adelaide and Sydney; moreover, Vogler was dead out of form; Faulkner was making so many runs that it was not in human nature that he should get many wickets; and though Schwarz bowled with splendid persistency, nothing could stop the flood of runs. Faulkner had a wonderful tour with the bat, scoring over 2,000, a feat, I believe, never accomplished by any other batsman, and actually averaging 73 in the five big games. But even his batting was eclipsed by Victor Trumper's. I remember Faulkner himself once telling me that on one occasion he conceived the idea that a fast yorker on the leg-stump first ball might provide a conceivable chance of outing Trumper "before he had looked round." The yorker was duly delivered: Trumper slid forward his front leg, flicked his bat across from the direction of point, and the ball sped between his legs to the square-leg boundary! He had been, for him, quite out of form on the 1909 tour in England, but now the supreme brilliancy and grace of his

batting left his friends and foes alike almost dumb in their admiration. Seven completed innings brought him 661 runs!

If the years 1907-1910 had witnessed the zenith of South African cricket, the ill-fated season of 1912 left no doubt as to a grave deterioration. Into the causes that militated against the success of "The Triangular Tournament" I have entered elsewhere, but there is no denying that South Africa's part in it was sadly inglorious. Once more the weather was all against her cricketers, but the truth was that she was at the parting of the ways. The generation that had won for her equality with her more experienced rivals had either dropped out or were getting past their best. There was no one to bowl the "googly" as it had been bowled in 1907, for even Faulkner, though he had many days of success, was not the danger he once had been; and of the old hands only the last named and Nourse had any real success with the bat. By England they were annihilated, and though in their last match with Australia they won a good lead in a drawn game, the effort came too late to redeem the two previous defeats. The one encouraging feature of the tour was the splendidly consistent and at times sensational successful leg-break bowling of Pegler, and the very promising form with the bat shown by young Herbert Taylor.

The regained supremacy of English over South African cricket was further emphasized in the winter before the War, when a very powerful M.C.C. side, under Johnny Douglas's captaincy, went south and defeated the Africans in all four of the Test Matches which were brought to a finish. This was pre-eminently Hobbs's and Barnes's tour; with an average of 76, the great batsman was even more consistent than he had been four years before. Perhaps he was, with rare exceptions, not quite so brilliant as on his earlier visit, but on every wicket and against all the bowling he was as indubitably as ever a supreme master.

As for Sydney Barnes's bowling it was by common consent the finest ever seen in South Africa, and so far as the first four Test Matches were concerned (illness prevented him from playing in the fifth) he seemed quite capable of dismissing the Africans single-handed. In the second of these games he actually took 17 out of the 20 wickets—a feat still unparalleled in Test history.

Yet in Taylor, at least, Barnes found a foeman worthy of his steel. Now Taylor found himself captain of the African side. The responsibilities of such a post and the failure that attended the efforts of his team might very well have cost so young a player much of his personal form. But Taylor played magnificently, and the English cricketers were unanimous in saying that finer batting than his against Barnes at his best they never hoped to see. Based on superbly correct principles, his batting was above all remarkable for superb footwork, and he possessed that gift, common to only

the greatest players, of being found in perfect position and balanced for his stroke well before the ball had reached him. In every one of the Test Matches he came off, but his greatest triumph was in the second match with Natal, when he defied Barnes in both innings, to make 91 and 100 out of totals of 153 and 216, and inflict upon the M.C.C. their one defeat of the tour.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### ENGLAND *v.* AUSTRALIA: 1920-1937

THE M.C.C. team which Douglas took out to Australia in the autumn of 1920 was, by common consent, fairly representative, though Spooner, who had originally been offered the captaincy, could not accept it, and a place should probably have been found for Holmes. Yet four months after they landed they had had to acknowledge defeat in all five Test Matches, a disaster unparalleled in the history of English cricket. Significantly enough they fared very well in the minor games, their bowlers doing all that was necessary, and their batsmen scoring very heavily. But in the Tests they were outclassed. It is true that luck went against them in the matter of injuries and of Hearne's illness, but their bowling proved innocuous, and, with the exception of Hobbs, who made three centuries and in general played up to his best form, their batsmen quite failed to realize expectations.

The determining factors in the result were Gregory's pace, for which nothing in English cricket had been adequate preparation, Mailey's patience and persistency with his googlies (his bag of 36 wickets was a record for one series of Tests), and the great strength of the Australian batting all the way down the side. For England, Parkin, it is true, got wickets, but at a terrible cost; Fender bowled cleverly at times, and more use should probably have been made of E. R. Wilson, by far the most accurate bowler on the side; but our out-cricket as a whole was weaker than it had ever been. With several men no longer young, the placing of the field presented an insoluble problem, and much of our running and throwing was far below international standard.

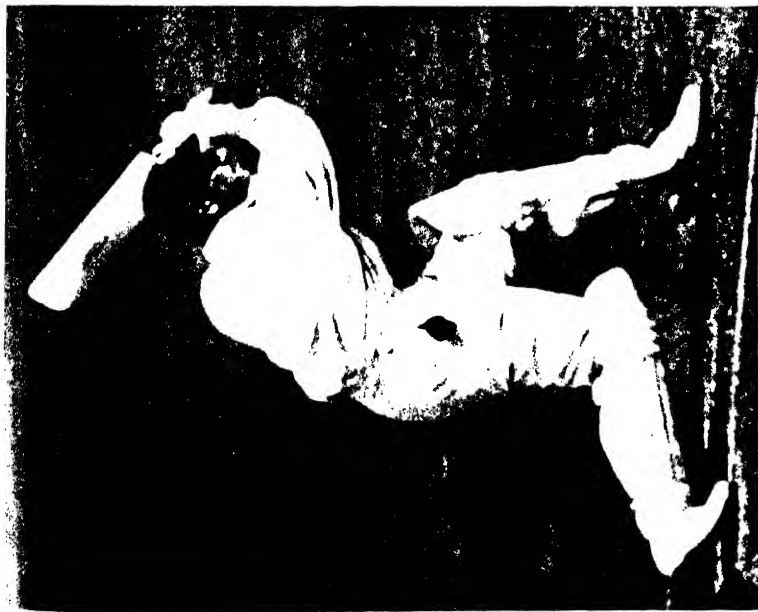
When in the spring of 1921 an Australian team, under the captaincy of Warwick Armstrong, accompanied our defeated eleven back to England, the discouragement at our disasters overseas was to some extent mitigated by the feeling that on our own grounds at least we should be able to give a better account of ourselves. That hope was short-lived, for by the beginning of July another rubber had been lost. It is true that in the two remaining matches our batting at last reasserted itself, but, with the Australians already victorious and inevitably, perhaps, no longer at full stretch, a couple of draws were no great consolation.



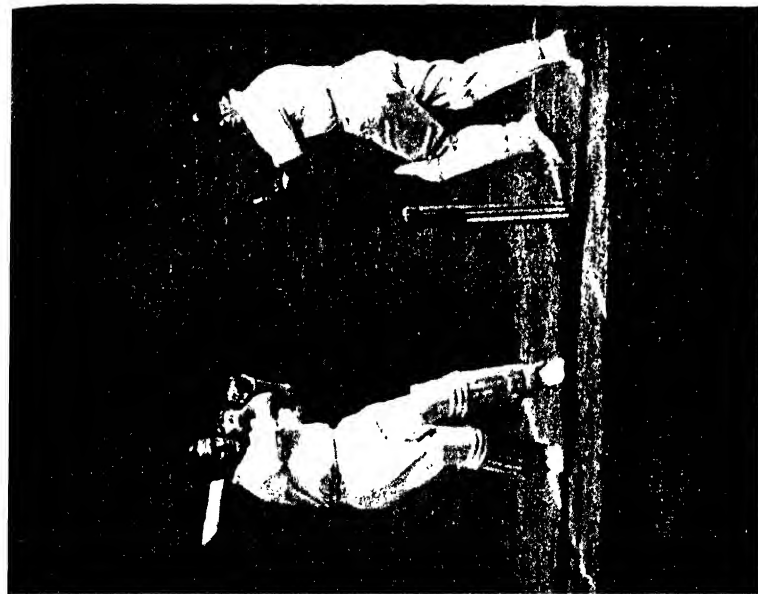
To some extent the fates were against us. For most of the summer the weather conditions were such as the Australians might have prayed for. Hobbs, kept out of the first two Test Matches by a strain, went down with appendicitis at the beginning of the third, and Hearne was so out of health that he only appeared at Leeds. The loss of these two great batsmen was a very great misfortune, for the rest of our batting, until it was too late, broke down completely before the very fast bowling of Gregory and Macdonald. With their energies carefully husbanded for the big games, and admirably handled by their captain, these two men dominated the first three Tests. Of the two, Macdonald, with his beautiful action, quick break-back, and occasional late swing, was perhaps the finer bowler, but it was the sheer intimidation of Gregory's pace that showed up our batting methods in the worst light, and so in the long run did a real service to English cricket. Woolley, still true to old-fashioned principles, played two glorious innings at Lord's, and Tennyson, who succeeded Douglas in the captaincy after that match, set a fine example of courage and aggression against the fast bowlers. In the last two games Russell made two centuries, and Mead, at the Oval, made the record score, for an Englishman in England, of 182 not out. But these successes were not enough to wipe out of mind the earlier failures, and in the Test Matches as a whole our batsmanship stood self-condemned. The fetish for back-play had played into the hands of the fast bowlers, and the inability to drive into the hands of Armstrong, who was thus allowed to immobilize our batsmen by his perfect length, and so secure, at a minimum expense, the rest necessary before launching one or other of his "storm-troops" to a renewed assault. George Gunn, whose total omission seems at this distance to have been an almost incredible piece of folly, would almost certainly have helped Woolley to raise our batsmen's morale if given the chance. But he, again, was one of the "old school."

The Australian batting, in contrast, was confident and effective. Warren Bardsley was consistency itself, and could fairly claim comparison with Clem Hill; whilst not since Victor Trumper's season in 1902 had any Australian batted quite so brilliantly as did Macartney throughout this tour. Like Trumper's, his methods were unorthodox and unique, but his gifts of eye, wrist, and confidence were extraordinary, and, at his best, he reduced our best bowlers to complete impotence. Both Gregory and Armstrong reinforced their bowling success with admirable batting, and Andrews, Collins, and Ryder all did well, particularly the first-named, whose batting in the Tests at Leeds and the Oval made a great impression.

The Australians were a splendid fielding side, the contrast between their work and our own on the first day of the Lord's match



W. HAMMOND



*Central Press*

H. SUTCLIFFE



being positively painful. If any further commentary upon the relative weakness of English cricket this year is needed, it may be looked for in the fact that before the season was out no fewer than thirty men had been tried in our Test Match Elevens; no wonder then, that, until it was too late, they failed to become or indeed to look like, a team.

At the time our own troubles monopolized our attention, and our opponents hardly received all the credit due to them. Whether or no they were as good a side as Darling's in 1902 is open to question—certainly they were much less highly tested—but until the very last lap of their tour they looked like achieving the unique distinction of an unbroken record. Then, in a most sensational match at Eastbourne, A. C. MacLaren's Amateur Eleven, after being dismissed for 43 in the first innings, beat them by 28 runs, and in the last match of their tour they again went down by a narrow margin to C. I. Thornton's Eleven at Scarborough. These defects were a great disappointment to our visitors, but they could not really tarnish a wonderful record.

#### AUSTRALIA WIN AGAIN.

##### *Tate and Sutcliffe arrive.*

By the time the old battle with Australia was due to be continued in '24, the decisive success over South Africa had very largely removed "the shadow of inferiority" which had lowered over English cricket since 1920. Australia, it was thought, were short of bowling. Tate should fully balance Gregory, and in a long-drawn-out test of batting endurance our unquestioned strength in this department should just get us home. These hopes were not realized: in the long run it was the greater reliability of the Australian batting right through the side that settled the issue. Apart from Tate's prowess, our attack was ill-balanced and, on hard wickets, ineffective; the experience of our two fast bowlers, Gilligan and Howell, only emphasized the truth which history should have taught us—that in Australia a fast bowler must be supremely good to be successful. We were overloaded with googly bowling, and neither Hearne, Freeman, nor Tyldesley ever looked like doing for us what Mailey and Grimmett did for the enemy. Above all, we lacked a straightforward, reliable spin bowler to hold up an end opposite to Tate.

In batting Woolley played some beautiful cricket, and Hendren had a good tour; but neither of them played as big a part in the Test Matches as their English records adumbrated. But it was in the latter half of our batting order that our real weakness lay. Time after time Australia recovered wonderfully from the havoc wrought by Tate's first assault, and time after time we failed to

profit by the wonderful start given to us by our great opening pair, or to drive home our advantage when occasionally we had obtained one.

But if we were beaten once again, we were very far from being disgraced. Indeed, the tour went far to revive the prestige of English cricket in Australia. In the first place the most competent judges—amongst them that prince of captains and shrewdest of critics, M. A. Noble—were unanimous in saying that the margin against us was much narrower than it looked. It was at least significant that on the only occasion when Gilligan won the toss we won the match by an innings; then the casualties to our bowlers almost certainly cost us the desperately fought match at Adelaide, and, by common agreement, such luck as there was in the umpires' decisions throughout the Tests did not exactly run in our favour.

In the last match we certainly cut up badly before Grimmett's bowling, and our overwhelming defeat remained a depressing recollection; but, taking the matches as a whole, a margin of three to two against us would seem to represent more accurately the respective merits of the sides.

But whatever our shortcomings as a team, we could at least point with unqualified pride to the fact that in Hobbs, Sutcliffe, and Tate we had the three outstanding cricketers of the world. As an opening pair our two great batsmen may not have represented quite the brilliance of Trumper and Duff, or quite the majestic method of MacLaren and Hayward, but in actual achievement they stand alone. Never have any English batsmen shown such patience, such tenacity, or such consistent form. Four times—thrice in succession—they raised the total to over 100 before the first wicket fell, and their all-day stand of 283, in face of the Australian total of 600, will always remain one of the grandest memorials to English pluck.

Hobbs, rather reluctantly persuaded to attempt the tour, further enhanced a reputation which might easily have suffered, while Sutcliffe's success, in his first visit overseas, was quite unprecedented. His four centuries, his double century at Melbourne, his aggregate for the five Test Matches, all were records; no new batsman had ever made quite such a sensation in Australia, not even Ranjitsinhji in 1897, or R. E. Foster in 1903-1904. As with Fry and Ranji twenty years before, his association with Hobbs in these matches, and in the games with South Africa that preceded them, proved the decisive stage in his evolution.

Not since the triumphant success of Barnes and F. R. Foster for Warner's Eleven in 1903-1904 has any English bowler so taken the Australian world by storm as did Tate during this tour, at the end of which he was universally acclaimed the greatest bowler in the world. Called upon to bear an almost insupportable burden,

he virtually carried the whole attack on his own shoulders, and his bag of 38 wickets for the five matches surpassed all previous records, English or Australian. A modern bowler, in the sense that he relied on "cut" rather than "spin," he was not the equal of Sydney Barnes in ability to use a wicket, but in physical qualifications, in vitality, in courage, in endurance, in extreme pace off the pitch, and in "swing" so long delayed as virtually to mean break, he established himself amongst the half-dozen bowlers of all cricket history.

Arthur Gilligan, though his tactics on occasion may have been open to criticism, enjoyed a great personal success in his leadership of the side, and under the inspiration of his example our fielding, for the first time for twenty years, equalled, and at times even surpassed, the Australians' own. Strudwick's wicket-keeping won universal admiration. Finally, it is pleasant to record that the Test Matches were fought out in a spirit of good sportsmanship, which was in welcome contrast to the atmosphere on occasions in '21, while popular interest in the tour was unprecedented.

#### THE TIDE TURNS.

Australia prejudiced the success of her England tour of 1926 by a domestic blunder which, in retrospect, is difficult either to justify or to comprehend. Instead of leaving the Sheffield Shield matches to determine the fifteen players who should make the second trip home since the War, the Board of Control announced the names of twelve "certainties" months before the team was due to sail. Even by adding an extra man, making sixteen in all, they could not, in the end, complement their batting strength with a hostile, nicely balanced attack. Grimmett, who had given unmistakable evidence of his skill in the last Test against Gilligan's team, proved as effective a leg-spinner as Mailey himself, and both of them reached the hundred wickets which is the popular measure of greatness in dealing with Dominion visitors to England. Gregory, however, as the preceding series had suggested, was not the violent and tireless machine of his best days, and Everett, his appointed understudy, turned out a failure. Not many days had passed before the absence of both D. J. Blackie and P. M. Hornibrook was first felt.

The First Test at Nottingham was a fiasco. Hobbs and Sutcliffe scored 32 for none on the first day, on a freshly cut wicket, and without the aid of sight-screens. Then the rain returned, and not another ball was bowled.

The Second Test drew record crowds to Lord's—it was estimated that ten thousand made their way to St. John's Wood in vain on the Saturday—and there was much high-class batting by both sides.

But this match made it abundantly clear that neither side had sufficient bowling to beat the other in three days, however long, on a wicket fair to both.

Bardsley monopolized the Australian first innings, and by scoring 193 not out, in a total of 383, became the third man to carry his bat through a whole Test innings, and the maker of the highest Test score at Lord's (Bradman was to annex this honour four years later). Early on the second morning an accident was discovered which might well have brought about a difficult situation. "Test wicket tampered with" soon proved a fallacious, if exciting, story, for it was a careless, not a criminal, hand that had allowed a half-turned hose-tap to cause a thin stream of water which bisected the fateful strip. If the escape had affected either end, the umpires would have been faced with a crisis of no mean order.

It was soon evident that England must score heavily, and the time dimension became her worst enemy. The Australians mostly concentrated on the leg stump, and packed the leg side—tactics which were only to be met, once a good start was assured, by a degree of enterprise. Yet Hobbs's 119, a technically blameless innings, lasted five full hours, and though Hendren and Woolley successfully took the game into the enemy's country England was a long way behind the clock by the close of play. Chapman's first Test innings was attraction itself, and it was his hitting which enabled Carr to declare at luncheon with a lead of 92. The miracle did not occur, and a quiet finish was made gracious by Macartney, whose 133 not out was a warning of yet more momentous things to come.

The Leeds ground blushes under the insinuation of being a traitor to English cricket, and it is indeed true that the Third Test, which was always played there, has never run well for the home side. In 1926 it was Carr's calamitous decision to put Australia in that proved the vital move. Or rather, it should be said, the combination of this offensive gesture, for which, in itself, there was not a little to be said, with the immediately previous decision to stand down Parker, of Gloucester. To leave out the most destructive left-arm spin bowler in the country, and then invite the opposition to bat on a wet wicket, argue, in conjunction, a lack of judgment and liaison amounting to supreme folly. When, from the first ball of the match, the great Bardsley was caught in the slips off Tate, Carr may well have reflected on the kindness of the gods. A minute later, however, from Tate's fifth ball, and the edge of Macartney's bat, Carr at third slip dropped a catch which so efficient a fielder would have held five times out of six. As the ball fell to earth a flickering sun departed behind the clouds, and there it remained while Macartney proceeded to the scoring of one of the classic centuries of all time.

He and the placid Woodfull batted together until 235 runs told the grim story of the gamble that failed: on the one hand the swift and brilliant stroke player, always, it seemed, on the point of surrendering his wicket to some crowning impertinence, yet never allowing his genius to outstrip the bounds; on the other the inexorable unimaginative machine. Australia made 494 by luncheon on the second day, Richardson (100) staying with Woodfull (141) when Macartney left. By the close several lapses from discretion had brought England into real danger, with 182 runs on the board and only two men left. Next morning Geary and Macaulay redeemed their non-success as bowlers in a stubborn stand of 108, and so England needed to score 200, or to bat for four hours. The limitations of Australia's bowling were not often so apparent as on this occasion, when, although there were worn spots on a wicket from which the top had been removed on the first day, England were never reduced to a mere passive resistance. A score of 254 for three helped to heighten English confidence in anticipation of Manchester.

Rain, however, was then as invariable an accompaniment of a Manchester Test as is English ill-fortune at Leeds. The Fourth Test was a predestined draw. Ten balls were bowled on the first day. Australia batted all the second, Woodfull and Macartney with a century each again seizing the honours in a total of 335. Bardsley (captain of Australia in the continued absence of Collins through illness) omitted to declare, though there was something to be got out of the wicket after tea, thereby proclaiming Australia's intention of banking on the "timeless" deciding Test at the Oval. England went one worse than Australia in losing her captain during the match, Carr developing tonsillitis and handing over the leadership to Hobbs. Ernest Tyldesley added to the pleasure of the Mancunians by contributing 81 towards England's 305 for five.

No English Test has been anticipated with such universal interest as that which was to mark the turn of Australia's long tide of victory. The Oval, perhaps, is richer in Test history than Lord's itself. It saw the first Test on English soil in 1880. At Kennington two years later the Demon Spofforth scattered fourteen English wickets to bring about Australia's first victory (by seven runs), and to inspire *Punch's* well-worn lines. After four draws the first Test without limit of time was now to declare the long-awaited result. Sensation did not await the match itself. When the England team was announced the name of Chapman appeared instead of Carr at the head of the list. With the lapse of time the change appears better-founded than it did, perhaps, in the heat of the moment. Since his illness during the Fourth Test Carr had suffered a very distinct loss of form as a batsman, while Chapman, with an average in the fifties and previous successes to his credit against the



Australians, was on the crest of a wave. There was no room for both if Rhodes was to be included—which was actually the selectors' more surprising and equally justified decision. If it can hardly be suggested that Chapman's natural flair for captaincy was foreseen in August, 1926, it is equally beyond probability that Carr was paying the penalty for any alleged faults in his handling of the team in previous Tests. To seek for some sinister motive behind the change in captaincy was, however, only in character with the popular Press, ever since the news departments of the various national papers had begun, as a rule with little understanding and less scruple, to supplement the function of the sporting-rooms, who knew their business.

It was the exaggerated estimates of attendance and consequent congestion which were responsible for another surprise when the match was due to start—the Oval was little more than half full. On subsequent days the attendance was a fairer reflex of public interest. Nothing indeed in this extraordinary match went according to plan. At the end of the first day England had made 280, and Australia 60 for four. The pitch certainly was of the sluggish order, but equally unresponsive to batsman and bowler. The majority of the batsmen seemed to be groping uncertainly in search of a quite uncalled-for variation of technique. Chapman himself played quite the best innings, scoring 49 before Mailey, as it were, said "Chase this one," and had him stumped, stretching injudiciously after a widish ball in quest of the odd single. Mailey, indeed, bowled with infinite subtlety in this, his last Test. Sutcliffe contributed a dogged 76, but he, like most of the others, was cramped by the brilliant Andrews, perched like an impudent robin a few yards from the bat.

### *The Classic Duel.*

Collins signalized his return to the team by a characteristically dour innings on the Monday, while Gregory dealt with a critical situation in a strongly contrasting manner. His 73 in an hour and three-quarters, Collins's 61 in three hours and forty minutes, and a skilful stand of 67 by Oldfield and Grimmett put Australia in a lead of 22. Moreover, Hobbs and Sutcliffe had a fateful hour to face before the close. This they spanned successfully. Overnight it rained heavily, and the famous pair carried on in the morning conscious that in the next few hours the match must be decided. The absence at first of sun and wind meant they could play themselves in in some composure. When the elements stirred at about twelve o'clock Hobbs and Sutcliffe were ready for them. From then until luncheon the ball bit, and bit viciously, rising sharply as it turned, so that if it could not be "killed" at the pitch it had to be followed and, if possible, left alone by means of that last-moment

dropping of the wrists at which both batsmen were past masters. No tenser scene could be imagined as, over after over, the duel continued. Richardson, bowling round the wicket, pitched his off-breaks persistently on the leg and middle stumps. His accuracy was exceptional, but the fatal misjudgment of length, the mistiming of stroke would not come. Where a Blythe (or a Rhodes) must surely have induced an error with the left-hander's ball that *leaves* the bat at the blind spot, Richardson could not succeed against such superlative technique with the ball *coming on* to the bat. Macartney, to be sure, bowled a longish spell, but had not the power of spin of a top-class left-arm bowler. Mailey and Grimmett were a little too slow through the air to be ideally suited.

Luncheon passed, and Hobbs reached the finest of all his hundreds against Australia, before, at 172, a ball from Gregory came back and brushed his off-bail. Sutcliffe, with a changing band of helpers, stayed on through the day. It would not be true to say he dominated the play, for I can remember the times we sighed with relief as he played forward to Mailey's leg-break and providentially avoided contact before the ball passed dangerously close to the off-stump. Yet he gave no actual chance, and as a specimen of all that cricketers mean by "Yorkshire grit" this innings of Sutcliffe's, stretched over seven momentous hours, defies comparison. He was bowled finally, and fittingly enough, in Mailey's last over.

On the last day Tate knocked a few more cheerful nails in the coffin before Australia set out on the sombre, hopeless formality of scoring 415 on a ruined wicket. As it happened, more rain hastened the end. When four men were gone for 35, with Rhodes, at the age of forty-nine, wheeling away as skilfully as ever on a turning pitch, Australia's chance of making a presentable fight had disappeared. By six o'clock the innings was over for 125, stumps and bails were being seized by the Australians as souvenirs, and an English crowd, for the first time for fourteen years, was allowing itself the full luxury of paying tribute to the good sportsmanship of a vanquished Australia.

#### CHAPMAN'S TRIUMPH.

##### *Hammond Breaks Records.*

The M.C.C. team which sailed for Australia under Chapman's captaincy in the autumn of 1928 was probably the strongest that had represented England abroad during this century. Indeed, but for one deficiency in its make-up, the lack of a right-arm leg spin bowler, the team which took the field in the Test Matches was ideally constituted. "It's bowling that wins matches" is a cliché

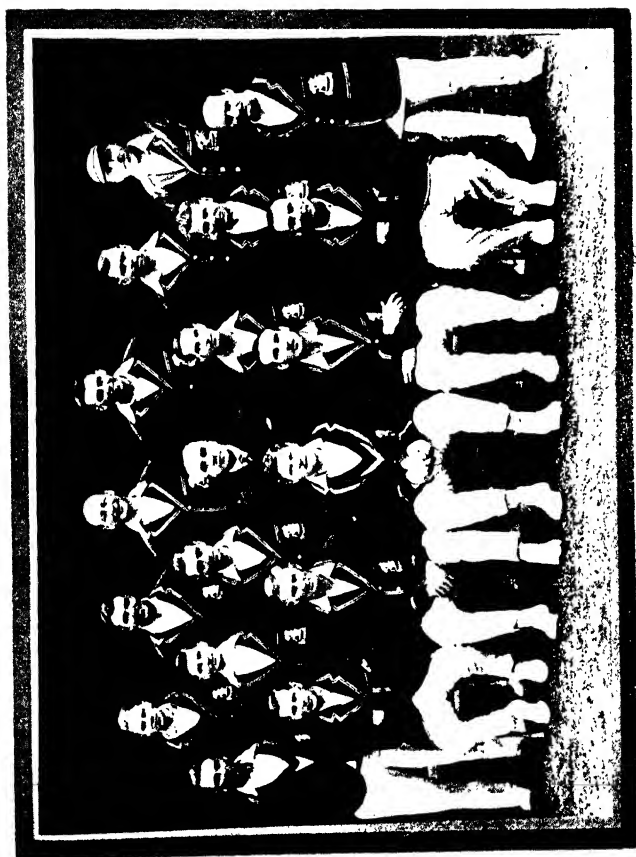
representing no more than a half-truth in the case of a time-limitless Australian series, wherein the result may not come into sight until the seventh day. There is plenty of evidence that within the last ten years Australian wickets have undergone a basic reconstitution. On Chapman's tour, however, the old "shirt-front" properties were still as marked as ever, and, after the first fury of the attack had launched itself, wickets were apt to fall as frequently on account of some lapse from discretion or concentration on the part of the batsman as from any special merit in the ball in question.

England was most admirably led, and her bowlers both judiciously handled and unflaggingly supported in the field; but the rock on which Australia split was a massed batting strength so formidable that, in the prevailing conditions, a score of 500 in the first innings was an odds-on chance. If it is allowed that Hobbs, Woolley, Hammond, Hendren, Sutcliffe, and D. R. Jardine are the best half-dozen English batsmen since the War, England's batting powers in 1928-9 need be emphasized no further. For only Woolley of these six was not present in Australia, and only Hobbs was in anything but his prime. He was still a great player by any other standards than his own, and no doubt was happy enough to be able to relax and watch Hammond maintain the heat and burden of the day.

Hammond, on his first visit to Australia, was a triumphant success. Curtailing his range of stroke to the extent of avoiding all risk, he piled century upon century in the Tests in an ever-growing monument to unwavering judgment and amazing concentration of purpose. In the State matches the crowds saw something of that offside brilliance with which he thrills the spectators on English fields. He permitted himself no flippant lapses from austerity in the Tests, and his record of successive double centuries, two single hundreds in the same match, 905 runs in the series, and an average of 113 are targets which, unless the character of Australian pitches reverts once more, may stand for ever. If the *tempo* of the Tests was often almost unbearably slow, the fault lay rather in the method than the men. By the same token the fact that Woolley was never a real success in time-limitless cricket may very reasonably be held as an indictment of the system rather than of the greatest stylist who ever walked to the wickets. The remaining English batsmen, except Chapman, who went to the other extreme of injudiciousness and invariably paid the penalty, all followed more or less in Hammond's deliberate footsteps.

Australian officialdom was somewhat slow to appreciate the proper conclusions to be drawn from England's recovery of the Ashes in 1926. The appearance of a raw youth called Bradman, who was promptly dropped, was the only concession made to the claims of a new generation in the selection of the team for the First Test

1928-29

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at Brisbane, and even England's "record" victory by 675 runs was not enough to encourage an immediate change of attitude. If the team that represented Australia in the Fifth Test had found its way into the second, the rubber might still have been England's, but the revivifying process would have been amply vindicated. As it was, England won the first four Tests, if by ever-decreasing margins, before Australia's consolation came in the last.

The England first innings at Brisbane was a triumph for Hendren (169), whose century, following his first in a Test in 1926, put the detractors of his temperament quite out of countenance. Larwood (70) played the innings of a thoroughly efficient batsman, and nearly everyone made a score. The Australians suffered one disaster after another. First Gregory, after bowling almost as of old for the first two days, dropped out of the match with an injured knee, which proved to have ended his great career for good and all. Then came the abject failure of their batting before the speed of Larwood, and the humiliating experience of fielding out while England heartlessly built on to their enormous lead. Kellaway, too, had broken down before the final act of the drama, the dismissal of Australia for 66.

One incident must be recorded which had a big influence on this series. In Larwood's first over in the first innings Woodfull half-cut, half-snicked him between Hendren at third slip and Chapman in the gully. The ball flew at terrific speed off the bat, and was next seen in the outstretched left hand of Chapman, whose leap had taken him from the gully almost into Hendren's lap. This incredible catch, one of the finest ever seen on the cricket field, set England's standard for the Tests, while the fear of its repetition had a singularly disturbing effect on the Australians whenever they faced Larwood and Tate. It is said that the English side did not drop a catch in the Tests from this moment until the Ashes were won.

Australia, winning the toss, made 253 in the first innings at Sydney, at the expense of the services of Ponsford, whose left hand was so badly hurt by his *bête noire*, Larwood, that he could play no more during the season. England's crushing response of 636 broke the existing record. Hammond played a truly great innings of 251, and every Englishman made double figures. All that a Sydney crowd could find to applaud among the performances of its own players was the superlative fielding of Victor Richardson close to the wicket. It was, however, characteristic of the generous if rough and ready sportsmanship of the Australian "fan" that when the Sydney *Sun* organized a Birthday Fund for Hobbs, who became forty-six during the match, a world's record crowd turned up to see the presentation made, and to pay a spontaneous tribute to that hero which he can never forget, on his last appearance in a Test at Sydney. Despite a fighting century of the highest order by

Woodfull, and a most attractive one by Hendry, England was set to score only 15 runs in the last innings.

The third Test at Melbourne provided one of the greatest battles in the history of England *v.* Australia. Still unwilling to take the plunge, the Australian selectors had at last restored Bradman, and given a trial to a young all-rounder named a'Beckett. Australia won the toss, and sacrificed only three wickets in Melbourne's notorious black spell before luncheon on the first day. Afterwards the wicket was of the kind batsmen dream about, and for the first time the England shock troops retired in favour of the more subtle undermining of White. Ryder, who had made the best a stranger to captaincy could have been expected to make of a most difficult and thankless task, and Kippax, the polished stylist, made centuries, and Bradman 79. The latter a restrained but promising venture marred only by a palpable lack of knowledge in running between the wickets. Hammond (200) was again the mainstay of a sluggish English innings which accomplished a lead of no more than 20. In the absence of Larwood with an injured heel the burden of England's bowling fell again on White, whose accuracy and slight changes of flight, supported by brilliant fielding, refuted once more the old doctrine that a slow left-arm bowler is an unwarrantable extravagance in Australia. A now confident Bradman used his feet to hit him on the drive, so that for once White was forced to place a man by the screen, and Bradman's first Test century was reinforced by another from the rock-like Woodfull.

On the sixth afternoon England went in to make 332 to win on a wicket made sticky by hot sun following a thunderstorm, and if ever in this series Australians felt that they had the old enemy in their pockets it was now. The Melbourne experts prophesied that England should be out by tea; or, alternatively, that she would not make a hundred. At the close of play she was half-way to her goal, and the dreaded gluepot had presented Australia with precisely one wicket. Hobbs and Sutcliffe repeated their Oval triumph of the last series, scoring 105 together by the same masterful methods, and proving themselves afresh the greatest bad-wicket partnership of all time. When the pitch was at its worst Hobbs found the opportunity of sending in word to his captain, asking that Jardine might come in next. The alteration was duly made, and on Hobbs's dismissal Jardine made his most valuable contribution to the success of the tour by staying with Sutcliffe till stumps were drawn. It needed more than three hours' dogged batting next day before the end came, for the wicket, now caked hard, was too brittle to stand the roller. There was a minor collapse when a handful more were needed, but Geary pulled a half-volley to the pickets, and the Ashes were won with three wickets to spare.

Australia's improvement produced a record crowd at Adelaide,

even though the rubber was decided—an astonishing indication of the nation's love of cricket. The most important feature of the match was a magnificent innings, on his first appearance, by Jackson, a nineteen-year-old New South Wales colt, who made 164 in five hours and a quarter without giving a chance, and in so doing provoked the most phlegmatic critic to superlatives. Jackson had the eye, the wrist, and the freedom of stroke of the truly great player, and though to speak of him already in terms of Trumper, with whom he was frequently compared, was crowning him with too heavy a crown, he was unquestionably the most promising discovery of a generation which included Bradman himself. Alas! Jackson was never the same man after this season. He was ailing throughout the English tour of 1930, and exactly four years after his great triumph at Adelaide was laid to rest. England won the Fourth Test by 12 runs, Hammond taking hundreds in each innings, and joining with Jardine in a record stand of 262 for the third wicket in the second. Even Hammond's feat was, from the physical standpoint, no more remarkable than that of White, who in the stifling heat bowled 124 overs in the match and took 13 wickets for 256 runs, one of the greatest feats of sustained accuracy and endurance in Test history.

The last Test could hardly help being an anti-climax from the English point of view, more especially since neither Chapman nor Sutcliffe was fit to play. Chapman's absence opened the door to another young left-hander, Leyland, who began a gallant Test career with a century, while Hobbs closed his, so far as Australia was concerned, with another. And a brilliant epilogue it was, the great man finding once more much of the zest and sparkle that had first entranced a Melbourne crowd twenty-one years earlier. Australia was asked to make 286 in the fourth innings, having replied to England's initial 521 with a courageous 491, and she did so almost comfortably by 5 wickets. Moreover, two new bowlers, Wall (fast) and Hornibrook (slow left-arm), and Fairfax, an all-rounder, were successfully launched into Test cricket. The umpiring in this match, it must be recorded, called forth much unfavourable comment.

#### BRADMAN MAKES HISTORY.

The seventeenth Australian team to visit England was captained by W. M. Woodfull. In preferring him to Ryder and Richardson those responsible no doubt allowed the fact that Woodfull alone was an integral part of the Test side to carry heavy weight. They may also have anticipated fully what an admirable leader this quiet-spoken, unassuming person would make. For Woodfull did make a notable success of his job from all aspects, both on this and the next tour, and that without over-much official assistance as



regards the social side on either occasion. If he never aspired to the daring and imagination of a Fender or a Noble, he showed a sureness in grasping the essentials of a situation, and a control in personal direction, that never failed Australia. Woodfull probably made fewer positive mistakes than any recent Test captain. His individual popularity quickly extended from those who played against him to the English public at large.

The First Test at Nottingham was proof enough of with what resilience Australia had cast off the shadows of Brisbane, Sydney, and Melbourne eighteen months before. With the luck of the toss and of the weather all against her she hunted England home to a margin of 93 runs, after threatening for most of the final day actually to score the 429 necessary to win. Against Australia's disadvantage in having to bat on a sticky wicket in her first innings, and one that had inevitably worn somewhat bare in her second, England was deprived on the last day of the bowling of Larwood, who had developed gastritis. Thus her resources were reduced to two length bowlers, a brilliant but unreliable shock bowler (Robins), and an occasional bowler, Hammond, whom Gloucestershire had hardly called upon during the season. So it must always be in case of illness, until the Heaven-sent all-rounder descends upon us, or Marylebone makes the eleven into twelve. Hobbs, Chapman, and Robins took the honours of England's moderate first innings of 270, and they alone batted with confidence against Grimmett, who had begun to weave his ominous spell round several of England's best players. In Australia Grimmett, lacking the great strength of finger of a Mailey, has always been a most expensive Test bowler since his dramatic first appearance in 1925. In England, however, not only did the turf take his spin, but the heavier air greatly helped his flight. Ingenuity, patience, and accuracy Grimmett has always possessed. At the close of a foreshortened second day Australia had replied with 140 for 8. Tate fired the first broadside, bowling Ponsford round his legs, seeing Chapman catch Woodfull in the gully only less remarkably than he had done at Brisbane, and then shattering Bradman's defence with a breakback, all for 16 runs. A skilful effort by Kippax deserved to save Australia from the crowning disaster of having to bat again that night, but England had not the bowlers capable of exploiting the wicket to the full. Next day England sought to speed up her run-getting with moderate success, the maestro again reaching the seventies in a manner that mocked his years, and Hendren overcoming a period of awful suspense. Woodfull fell that night, Australia leaving off needing 369.

A significant effort by Bradman was seen on the last day. Farming Tate himself, he nursed four successive partners through nearly four hours of struggling, endeavouring in the process to keep

Australia well up with the clock. When Bradman and McCabe were together it seemed that Australia's task was quite within her compass, until the very misfortune of Larwood's absence reacted sensationally in favour of England. Larwood's place in the field was filled by a member of the Trent Bridge staff named Copley. McCabe drove the exhausted Tate tremendously hard and low on the onside. It looked a four from the instant it left the bat, but Copley, at mid-on, caught the ball as he threw himself sideways to his right, and retained it as he met the ground and rolled over. Thus did a quite unknown player write his name in history.

It was Robins, whom Chapman had only dared to put on once previously, who just before tea deceived and bowled Bradman with a googly which he left alone. That was virtually the end of a grand match.

England had to take the field at Lord's without Larwood and Sutcliffe, and their combined absence may well have cost her the match, brilliantly as Woolley batted in the first innings, and bravely as G. O. Allen fought in the second. Hobbs and Woolley were not the ideal opening pair, while a supremely easy wicket drew Allen's teeth. The England first innings opened with the swift dismissal of Hobbs, and a glorious three-quarters of an hour of Woolley, who treated the Australians as if they were a team of schoolboys until Wall somehow clung on to a vicious slash in the gully. Of all cricket "ifs," if Woolley had gone on is one of the most intriguing. However, the spectators were compensated by a remarkable début on the part of the Jam Saheb's nephew, K. S. Duleepsinhji, who had been twelfth man at Nottingham. An occasional moment of discomfort against Grimmett, and two chances, one at 98, were small enough faults in a charming and prolonged exhibition of fluent driving, crisp cutting, and a neatness of deflection which gave more than a hint of Ranji himself. Duleepsinhji seemed certain to play out the day when, as if under orders, he began charging out at Grimmett and promptly paid the price. Still, his 173, and England's 425, enabled the spectators to settle snugly into their seats to see what Australia could do in reply. English equanimity was soon, and very rudely, shattered.

Woodfull and Ponsford, despite uniformly excellent fielding, put on a sure and relentless 162, by which time the English "attack" was in a weary tangle, ready indeed to be butchered by a man of Bradman's exceptional versatility. In the two and three-quarter hours before the close Bradman made 155 not out, and the defeat of Woodfull for the same figure was England's only consolation. Only at Manchester have I seen a more heart-breaking wicket than this, and never such a ruthlessly efficient innings as Bradman's, both in the evening when he leapt at the bowling like a tiger and on the Monday when he set out to wear it down once more. His

254 was much the highest score made in a Test in England, until this phenomenal young man knocked down his own record a fortnight later. Australia declared at 729 for 6, and not before the crowd had enjoyed the grim humour of watching an improvised 7 being stuck up under the total on the scoreboard.

Grimmett found a spot made by the bowlers' follow through at the Pavilion end, and with the hill to help him he turned the ball big distances, bowling Hobbs round his legs, and causing everyone but Chapman to scratch away doubtfully. Chapman arrived on the last morning at 141 for 4, and hit his first ball recklessly and high into the covers. Either of two men could have made the catch, but both lost the ball, which fell almost on Richardson's toe. Duleepsinhji soon left, but Chapman and Allen stayed until luncheon, Chapman protecting Allen from Grimmett, and Allen keeping his captain away from the faster bowlers against whom he was prone to slash. It was a stand which did much for the prestige of the Pavilion. When Allen left, Chapman indulged in a death-or-glory onslaught on Grimmett which took him to 121 with hardly a false stroke before Hornibrook beat him at the other end. There was a real thrill when, in the Australians' second innings, Robins and Tate got Ponsford, Bradman, and Kippax for 22, Chapman making yet another superb catch in the gully to send back Bradman; but Woodfull and young McCabe safely accounted for the remainder of the 72 that were needed.

The Leeds and Manchester matches were drawn, as at each week-end it had been plain they would be, but the progress of each had emphasized that, if all things were equal, a desperately difficult task awaited England at the Oval. At Leeds, on just such a wicket with just as fast an outfield as at Lord's, Bradman batted all the first day and twenty minutes of the second for the largest of all his scores, 334. Again the English bowlers could find no answer to his wide repertory of stroke and the amazing certainty of his execution, and indeed on a wicket of such quality there seemed none.

At Manchester the selectors gave three bowlers new to the series a chance to achieve distinction, but, since they had a wet wicket to bowl on, the merits of Peebles, Goddard, and Nichols could hardly be compared statistically with those of Tyldesley, Geary, and Larwood, whom they had superseded. However, Peebles at least revealed a power of penetration allied to good length which caused his selection in front of the other leg-break candidates, Robins, Freeman, and Tyldesley, at the Oval. Peebles indeed was desperately unlucky in this Fourth Test, though the acute difficulties which he presented to Bradman during the uneasy half-hour that the latter survived were no doubt some compensation for the lack of a startling analysis. This innings of Bradman's caused many who had hailed him already as the greatest of all batsmen to adjust

their opinions. The extraordinary thing was that he had proceeded triumphantly until the end of July without often having had to suit his game to the weather.

*England Change Horses.*

As in 1926, the England XI was sent on to the field at the Oval with a new captain. It was, in fact, R. E. S. Wyatt's first Test against Australia. On the face of it, Chapman was discarded on slender grounds. Since he had assumed the captaincy of England she had won six victories and lost only once, in spite of a singularly brilliant effort by Chapman himself. He had batted more successfully in the Tests than anyone save Duleepsinhji and Sutcliffe, and was the one English batsman before whom Grimmett shed his dangers. Moreover, the Australians had a wholesome dread of his catching near the wicket. Against these things allegations of tactical idiosyncrasies in the two drawn Tests did not seem like grave misdeeds. In favour of Wyatt were the additional steadiness of his batting in a timeless match and his possible utility as a change bowler. Whysall and Larwood for Goddard and Nichols were the other alterations in the England side.

England made 405 in the first innings of the match on a beautiful wicket, although at the Oval, as at Lord's, the second day saw the wicket at its very easiest. Wyatt justified his choice as a batsman at any rate by helping Sutcliffe (161) to take the total from the critical region of 199 for 5 to 367 for 6 in a partnership of unspotted virtue. Sutcliffe's great effort was otherwise poorly supported. Australia replied with another mammoth score, 695, being aided considerably by the fact that Duckworth's wicket-keeping, hitherto the one constant factor in England's cricket, fell from grace. Nor was the general level of the fielding so high as previously. Bradman made 232, and his stand of 243 for the fourth wicket with Jackson was the decisive phase. The finest batting of the match, indeed almost of the tour, came from Ponsford, who, although running a temperature, scored 110 of the 159 put on for the first wicket. When on the fourth morning Australia had to withstand a period when the ball was jumping dangerously after rain, the contrast between Jackson, who never gave an inch, and Bradman, who persistently moved towards square leg, was strongly marked. Peebles alone of England's bowlers ever shook the batsmen's confidence while the pitch was true. England needed 266 to save the innings defeat when play ended on the fourth day, Hobbs having been dismissed for 24. Rain and a consequently blank Thursday drowned any hopes of setting Australia a task. Hornibrook, the left-arm bowler, took his chance, and no one could doubt the superiority of Australia.

## THE LEG THEORY SERIES.

The winter of 1932-33 witnessed the most dramatic cricket and the most bitter controversy that the game has known for a hundred years. At one stage of the M.C.C. tour in Australia opinion overseas was so inflamed that a summary abandonment of the trip seemed perfectly possible. Fortunately wiser counsels in the end prevailed, but the laurels which Jardine's side brought home with them after playing some of the finest cricket ever shown overseas nevertheless lacked something of freshness, and the suspicion gained ground steadily that such a success was far from being worth the cost.

The story is all the more sad because our men had proved so decisively their superiority, had shown such determination and self-control under the most trying circumstances, and had been led by a captain whose courage, tenacity of purpose, and tactical skill had perhaps never been equalled in all Test Match history.

Before he left England, Jardine must have visualized his problem more or less as follows: "The Australian batting is strong and Bradman must be dealt with if he is not to win matches by himself, but they are not accustomed to, nor do they relish, real pace. I have four fast bowlers and it is they who will have to win the rubber for me. How can I best exploit their pace and at the same time conserve their energy?" In answer he concluded that, as soon as the shine left the ball, a direction of the assault on the leg stump with a supporting field would force the batsmen to play at the maximum number of balls bowled, though the well-known strength of the Australians on the on-side, and the great difficulty of maintaining this attack with the necessary accuracy to safeguard the short-legs may have prevented him from building on his plan any extravagant hopes.

Modified experiment on such lines had been made independently in the previous summer by Larwood, Voce, and Bowes (in the latter's case evoking outspoken protest both from Hobbs at the wicket and P. F. Warner in the Press), but the report that the application of Glenroy soil had reduced the pace of Australian wickets was not encouraging to our fast bowlers in general.

The new tactics were not revealed until the tour had been in progress a month, but when in the game against an Australian XI at Melbourne Larwood unmasked his full battery, suspicion was born that cricket history was in the melting pot, and the experience of the first three Tests turned suspicion into certainty. Bowling at so tremendous a pace that no ball could be short enough to be innocuous, and so accurately that his short-legs were hardly ever endangered, it was his ability from the outside of the crease to run the ball in at the batsmen that constituted his greatest menace.

In describing this attack Hobbs and Mailey did not hesitate to use the word "terrifying," and though now and then an Australian was found to criticize the resource, if not the courage, of their batsmen, the cricketers of that country were as a whole absolutely united in its denunciation, and believed that it was sustained with the definite object of breaking their batsmen's nerve by men regardless of the very real danger it involved to limb, if not to life.

That that object was in the main attained the score sheets proved: Bradman, Ponsford, and McCabe did play brilliant innings, but even their morale was badly shaken, and they increasingly abandoned a true technique in favour of occasional and uneasy brilliance: over the side as a whole the physical menace of Larwood's bowling gleamed like malignant lightning.

But the price paid for victory was terribly heavy. Future generations may find it hard to imagine the resentment evoked in Australia, but it is not too much to say that, for a while, it came near to antagonizing a Dominion.

When English cricketers at home first read of the fierce barracking and the vitriolic Press attacks to which their team was being subjected, they were at once angered and bewildered, and these feelings were further exasperated by the ill-considered wording of the telegram in which the Board of Control, coining the famous term "body-line," denounced it to the M.C.C. as "unsportsmanlike." The latter, thirteen thousand miles removed from the facts, were bound to reject the Board's summary interpretation of them and react by envisaging the cancellation of the rest of the tour, if the good sportsmanship of their team remained officially in question. In subsequent cables the resources of diplomacy contrived to preserve superficial decencies, without either side really abandoning its original position; and, with Jardine sticking to his tactical guns even after the rubber had been won, the tour came to an end with Australia still exasperated and England still foggily resentful.

On the return of their team the M.C.C. held an inquiry and there were further "conversations" with the Board, but it was left for the events in the next two seasons in English cricket to bring the issue to a head. With that sequel we must deal in another place.

In winning the first Test at Sydney most conclusively by ten wickets after losing the toss England established a moral superiority which even the fact that Bradman had been unable to play did not greatly modify. Larwood's bowling on the one hand, and the relentless batting of Sutcliffe, Hammond, and the Nawab of Pataudi were the vital factors. Yet the performances of none of these prevented the chief honours of the match going to McCabe for the one brilliantly successful prolonged assault on leg-theory methods made during the series. Of Australia's opening score of 360 McCabe made 187 not out in just over four hours. Against the orthodox in

England's attack McCabe exhibited the wide range of stroke for which his batting had been admired in the Tests of 1930; the leg theory methods of Larwood and Voce he attacked in the only way they could be attacked, by sure and persistent hooking. Granted the superb eye and courage of a McCabe, a mastery of the hook stroke, and a little luck in avoiding "holing out," fast leg-theory could be opposed successfully. That much was proved on the very first day of the first Test. But all the other Australian batsmen (and probably most, if not all, of the English, too, if they had been under fire) fell short in one, if not more of these qualities; while McCabe himself never again got into his stride, and was generally dismissed by other means.

The first three English wickets realized more than a hundred each, and the third to leave was Sutcliffe, whose 194 was his highest innings against Australia. Sutcliffe's tactics, and Hammond's, had been a deliberate wearing down of Australia's bowling to the exclusion of all but the safest strokes, mostly the various types of on-side deflection. Sutcliffe had batted seven hours and a quarter, but his innings was almost a jolly affair in relation to that of Pataudi, who, after the bowlers had had two days in the field, was still scoring at a bare twenty runs an hour. Pataudi's 102 lasted five and a quarter hours, and England led on the first innings by 164. This proved to be Australia's exact total. She started disastrously, losing Woodfull and Ponsford for 2 runs, and Larwood's ascendancy was never threatened. He took 10 wickets in the match for 124.

The Englishmen found an odd wicket waiting for them at Melbourne, and the bringing in of Bowes, making four fast bowlers, to the exclusion of Verity, may have been the decisive gesture in a match of low scores. There had been no recent rain, yet the wicket began and remained loose and responsive—as remarkable a contrast to the usual Melbourne "black marble" as could be imagined. None of the pitches on which this tour was played had the pace, or the lasting qualities, of the traditional Australian pitches, but this one at Melbourne provided the most extraordinary example of preparation methods going askew. Australia's 228 was, first and foremost, the result of the patient skill of Fingleton, who signalized his promotion to opening batsman with a score of 85.

The total seemed miserably inadequate at the time, but it was sufficient to win the match. No one could cope with O'Reilly, and England ended up 59 behind. Bradman, whom Bowes had induced to drag on a long-hop first ball in the first innings, now scored not the least remarkable of his hundreds for Australia. No one else could stay, although the pitch was too slow to suit fast leg-theory, and Bradman's 103 not out was obtained out of 164. A Yorkshire partnership of Sutcliffe and Leyland saw England

through the third evening, but a collapse against O'Reilly and Ironmonger followed, and England were beaten by 111.

There followed the tragic climax to this most unhappy tour, on the fair Adelaide Oval. Feeling against the English bowling methods had been simmering throughout the first two Tests. Here it manifested itself officially in the notorious "body-line" cable, and unofficially in an unprecedented and deplorable outburst on the part of the crowd, which saw Australia gradually and surely lose grip of the game after a disastrous start by England, and, to add to its chagrin, two of the home batsmen incapacitated. The fact that no suspicion attached to either of the balls responsible for the injuries to Woodfull and Oldfield mattered little by now. The Australian public, fanned by its Press, was in a dangerous temper. Its saner element was concerned not with who won, but with whether the popular idol, Bradman, was struck. The consequences of another accident were unpredictable; but the presence on the ground of a considerable police force when England was in the field was by no means a superfluous precaution.

Such an atmosphere could have only one reaction on the English side. Faced with losing four of their best wickets for 37 at luncheon on the first day, they fought magnificently, and eventually reached 341. Australia made 222, only four of the wickets falling to the fast leg-theory exponents. And then England, having got on top, "dug in" to the tune of 412. A brilliant innings of 66 by Bradman, and the doggedness of Woodfull, who carried his bat for 73 through an innings lasting four hours, were the features of the fourth innings. Leyland, Wyatt, Paynter, and Verity were the men who saved the ship in England's first innings, and Leyland, Wyatt, Verity, Jardine, Hammond, and Ames all made between 40 and 85 in the second. Larwood had recovered his effectiveness for this match; but it should be recorded that 8 wickets went to Allen, who, as always throughout the tour, bowled in the conventional manner of a fast bowler.

The winning of the toss on a plumb Brisbane wicket in an intense damp heat, which the Englishmen found particularly trying, did not prevent a somewhat demoralized Australian team losing the fourth Test, and with it the Ashes. Again, the courage of Jardine's team struck a high note after the start had gone against them. An Australian score of 251 for 3 at the end of the first day looked black for England. Next morning Larwood and Allen quickly accounted for Ponsford and Bradman, and the length of the Australian tail (without the injured Oldfield to add a stiffening) was exposed. England's reply was in the spirit of this series. Every man from one to ten reached double figures, and a total of 356 took ten hours to make! But there was at least one heroic innings, judged by any standards. On the Saturday Paynter had had to retire to a nursing home with



a temperature. Overnight England were 99 for none, and there existed a reasonable hope that Paynter might not be required until the Tuesday. Wickets began to fall regularly on Monday, and when the sixth went down after tea Paynter appeared, having left his bed though still ill and weak. At the close Paynter was still there, and next day he and Verity took their stand to 96, and were still together when Australia's total was passed. England went out to field with a distinct moral advantage, even if the lead in runs was inconsiderable, and Paynter's 83 in four hours was assured of immortality.

Again England was able to make a mortal thrust at the end of the day. Woodfull and Richardson, whose opening partnership of 133 on the first day had seemed likely to solve one of Australia's chief difficulties, Bradman, and Ponsford were all out for 108. Again everything rested on McCabe, and the two left-handers who had been brought in to off-set fast leg-theory, Darling and Bromley. And once more Australia could not withstand the opening onslaught. The tail crumpled abjectly a second time, and England was left to score 160 for the rubber. Sutcliffe's dismissal at once was a setback, but Leyland and Jardine batted together for over two hours for 73, Jardine (24) at one point failing to score for over an hour while Ironmonger and O'Reilly wheeled away persistently wide of his leg stump. Next day Leyland (86) all but saw the business through, and, properly enough, a six by Paynter was the final stroke.

The Fifth Test at Sydney followed a remarkably similar course to the Fourth, England again getting 160-odd runs in the last innings without anxiety. This time Australia made 435 in her first innings, which was much her biggest score in the series; yet England topped it by a few, and, as before, shot out her opponents without ceremony when they went in a second time. The strain having slackened with the deciding of the rubber, the batting of both sides became a little less fearful, while the fielding suffered from a less intense concentration. England indeed missed more than a dozen chances of various kinds in the first innings. For Australia three young men made runs, O'Brien, Darling, and Lee, while Oldfield returned to notice with a half-century.

England's innings was notable for another Hammond century, and for an excellent and invigorating 98 by Larwood who, dare one say, contrived to suggest what might have been accomplished on previous occasions against the Australian bowling by confident, forceful batting, the proper use of the feet, and hitting through the line of the ball. Larwood saw no hidden menace in the half-volley, his driving causing Woodfull to appoint an out-fielder where none, as a rule, had been necessary. Allen, who in previous innings had been led into error by the spin bowlers, now played a good innings which ensured that Richardson and Woodfull would go in with a

load on their backs. As it happened, Richardson, like Fingleton at Adelaide, "bagged a pair," and though Woodfull and Bradman added 115, a headlong collapse followed the latter's departure. Bradman had answered fast leg-theory this time by an outrageous discrediting of all the principles, jumping almost wide of the leg-side popping-crease and steering the long hops down to third man or forcing them with strong fore-arm strokes into the covers. His was an astonishing innings quite beyond the compass of any other modern cricketer.

There had been some acrimony when England was batting concerning the straight follow-through of the bowler Alexander. Finally, however, the patch thus formed reacted to England's advantage, for Verity, who dropped the ball on it frequently, had everyone scratching, and ensured that his analysis for the Tests should be a little less fallacious than before by taking 5 for 33. Jardine took in Wyatt to face the last half hour of the fourth day, England requiring 164. Two wickets fell to Ironmonger, thanks to Alexander's "spot," for 43; but Wyatt dropped anchor and Hammond grew majestic as the end approached, finishing off the match with an enormous six. England ended the Test series the fresher side, and it is significant that this is one of only two occasions since 1895 when she has won the fifth Test of an Australian tour.

#### THE TESTS OF '34.

##### *O'Reilly Enters The Scene.*

Before the Australians of 1934 landed in England Jardine, in an interview, had bluntly expressed his disinclination to take the field against them, while Larwood, in inflammatory newspaper articles, later adopted a similar attitude. The effect of Larwood's absence may not have been great, for he had been desperately expensive in the Tests of 1930, and he would have had to operate on wickets similarly over-prepared four years later. Jardine's loss, however, was another matter altogether. In county cricket for Surrey and in representative matches in England over the last ten years, he had built for himself a unique reputation as a saver of causes at number five. With Hobbs in retirement from Test cricket, and Duleepsinhji an invalid, Jardine would have provided an invaluable stiffening in the middle of the order. As it was, the England batting could never quite make answer to the class of Bradman, Ponsford, and McCabe. Grimmett and O'Reilly pegged away almost without relief—they bowled, between them, 729 overs in the five Tests, and captured 53 of the 71 wickets that fell. Never were they mastered, and only on the drugged Manchester concoction were their accuracy and spin ever met with composure.

The luck which had assisted England to win at Nottingham in 1930 now befriended Australia, in that winning the toss in the first Test gave them the use of a plumb wicket, whereas the ball was beginning to move about considerably by luncheon on the second day, and thereafter became more and more responsive to the bowlers' intentions. The crisis of the match occurred when five Australian wickets fell in their first innings for 206. Another success to England then and she would have "had an end to bowl at." A total of 250 by Australia, perhaps an English lead of 75, and the boot would have been on the other leg. This is not a particularly extravagant piece of conjecture because Chipperfield was inclined to spar tantalizingly at Farnes in the early stages of his sixth wicket partnership with McCabe, and it was not his fault that on these occasions he always avoided a contact against the most hostile of the English bowlers. Still, Chipperfield, who had already justified his surprise selection for the tour by his excellent slip-fielding, made a highly commendable début, and no one could have begrudged him the single by which he missed his century. England, in spite of Hendren and Sutcliffe, and a fighting innings by Geary reminiscent of Leeds in 1926, were 106 behind; and, though Australia lost Woodfull and Ponsford at once, they were soon in full cry for a rapid total on which to declare. Woodfull in the end required England to bat from quarter to one until half past six, having put 380 between her and victory. The pitch being what it was, Woodfull would not have risked anything by bringing his men in half an hour earlier. Australia had only ten minutes to spare at the finish, and if England's number eleven had lasted out that period Woodfull would have had a difficult case to answer.

A polished piece of cricket by Walters, who in his first match against Australia acted as England's captain in the absence through injury of Wyatt, was the only aggressive note in the England second innings. But Leyland and Ames distinguished themselves in a stout rear-guard action against Australia's spinners which came very close to saving the day.

The toss won the second Test at Lord's, and the result of it made England all square on the rubber. The England innings followed its accustomed path against Grimmett and O'Reilly: a fair start, a depressing collapse, and then salvation from Leyland or Ames. In this case it was both of them, and each made an admirable hundred. Walters's 82 was the only other distinguished contribution in England's 440.

Walters's batting in this series did much to compensate a former generation for Australia's dominance. He was an "old-fashioned player" in the best sense of the term, with a generous back-lift, a fine sense of timing, and a beautifully easy follow-through. It was, of course, a somewhat natural corollary that his defence should be

likewise of the same vintage, and it was irksome to see the ball so often finding the hole in his bat just when he was threatening to knock Grimmett and O'Reilly off. Walters, however, was a remarkably consistent scorer up to a point, and his cricket was a splendid thing for English self-respect. It was a real disappointment that he should have found himself able to play the game no more after the middle of 1935.

Bradman produced a little gem of an innings—comparable to Woolley's four years earlier—in the 192 for 2 with which Australia had replied by the week-end. On Sunday came the rain, and the vital consideration was whether Australia would save the follow-on, which probably carried with it the winning of the match. Brown, a sound and strokeful opening batsman, twenty-one years of age, who had reached his century overnight, was quickly out, and then Verity fastened the Australians in his grip. The pitch he had to work on was nothing like that on which Hobbs and Sutcliffe had fought either at the Oval in 1926 or at Melbourne in 1929; but the ball was occasionally taking a divot and bouncing as it spun away, and Verity conceded nothing. He made the batsmen play all the time, and in truth they did not play desperately well. When McCabe left fifth, with Australia needing 85 to make England bat next, the odds were always on the fielding side. Chipperfield showed a saner notion of meeting the conditions than most, and was undefeated when Australia had failed to reach her goal by six runs.

In the second innings Woodfull earned the gratitude of England and Verity by demonstrating that the pitch was not by any means the horror that most of the others had suggested. Verity tempted Bradman craftily by bowling without a deep field, and after a tense quarter of an hour he lashed out against the spin, and sent the ball sheer to heaven. Ames's safe gloves were beneath it, and now nothing could save Australia. After tea the sun arrived to hasten Australia's doom, and she expired quickly and placidly. Verity took 15 wickets in the match for 104 runs in 58 overs, equalling, incidentally, the "bag" of Rhodes in a Melbourne Test thirty years earlier.

The Second Test emphasized the Australians' fallibility on a pitch affected by rain. That is a chink in the armour of the best Australian sides, for they have little opportunity in their own country of perfecting the technique required by such conditions. Trumper's adaptable genius is seen only once in a lifetime. Nothing however occurred to allay English fears that in fair conditions Australia was the stronger side.

The Third Test proved that on a certain type of wicket all men are more or less equal. The wicket had won for England at Lord's. At Manchester it declared quite firmly from Wall's first ball that *no one* should win. An average of five wickets a day fell for some-

thing over three hundred runs. To England's 627 for 9 Australia, despite the indisposition of three players, of whom Bradman was one, replied with 491. With England's failure to enforce the follow-on after making her highest score in a Test at home, all but a mild academic interest in the proceedings departed. Hendren, Leyland, and McCabe made centuries for their respective sides, and when Allen and Verity, England's nine and ten, were complacently putting on 95 together the folly of playing cricket on wickets like this must have struck many to whom it had not occurred before.

England was completely outplayed in the Fourth Test at Leeds, but when a well-merited defeat could hardly have been more than an hour or two off, a thunderstorm flooded the ground and finished the match. England's first innings was the most demoralizing episode of the season. After Keeton (deputizing for Sutcliffe) and Walters had scored 43 together, England's batting crumpled abjectly on a perfect wicket before the usual partnership, plus Chipperfield, who, as at Lord's, found some trick of flight to dispose of two of the star batsmen with guileless-looking leg-breaks. Bowes in an inspired spell overnight bowled Brown and Woodfull and had Oldfield caught at the wicket in the space of ten balls; but next day Bradman (304) and Ponsford (181) made everyone but Verity look a very ordinary bowler, and piled on runs inexorably from the start until five minutes to six. By this time they had taken the score from 39 to 427, and broken the record for any Test partnership in any country.

The difficulties of English team selection in the absence of all-rounders is well illustrated by the attack on this occasion. Bowes and Hammond (whose wickets cost 72 runs each in this series) took the new ball. Mitchell, the Derbyshire leg-break bowler, was first change (he took 1 for 225 in the three innings in which he bowled), followed by Verity and Hopwood of Lancashire. The latter was chosen for all-round virtues, with fair figures to commend him, but as a batsman he lacked the self-assurance necessary for International cricket, and his bowling was only an accurate shadow of Verity's. But, assuming the choice of Mitchell to have been an error of judgment, there was no obvious claimant in the counties. Farnes had been pressed into service at Lord's, though he had suffered a strained leg. Thereafter it was considered too risky to play him, though as soon as term ended at Worksop he began to bowl very successfully for Essex.

It was easy to criticize the selectors after the event, but in fact they had precious little material to build with. On such a wicket there seemed little reason why men of the skill and tenacity of Ponsford and Bradman should ever leave us. Again, as often is the case with these wickets, the second day found the conditions

at their most one sided. On the third day Bowes hit upon another destructive spell, and the innings closed for 584. For the only time in the series Hammond looked like making any number of runs when England batted again, but was tragically run out. The score had struggled to 229 for 6 when the heavens opened at one o'clock on the Tuesday.

Just before the Fifth Test the Australians had a regrettable experience at Nottingham. Their match with the county proceeded in an unfriendly atmosphere for two days, Voce bowling short to a crowded leg side, vocally encouraged by many of the spectators. When on the third day the Notts club stated that he was suffering from sore shins and Voce did not take the field, the behaviour of the spectators lost all restraint. The Australians afterwards complained at what they considered was "direct attack," and, as in the case of Middlesex, on the evidence of their match with Notts at Lord's, the other counties found the charge proven, and Notts were required to apologize. This was the only lapse from courtesy encountered by the Australians in England.

The Fifth Test saw the substitution of Allen and Clark for Mitchell and Hopwood. Again England, losing the toss, had to contend with a dominant Bradman, and again Ponsford was his partner. This time it was fielding which let England down deplorably, for while Bradman gave no chance Ponsford, in his first two hundred runs, might have been out five times. All but one were certainly very difficult catches, and Ponsford, apart from a distressing tendency to turn his back on the short fast ball, was almost as masterful a stroke-player as Bradman. Wyatt was hampered in his setting of the field by the presence of Woolley (taking the place of Hendren, who was injured) as well as three fast bowlers, all of whom had to be placed near the wicket. Athletically the contrast between the teams was considerable. Bradman, as at Leeds, was the nearest approach to technical perfection that cricket is likely to see, and Australia made 701, the Bradman-Ponsford stand being responsible for a new record of 472!

No one could really have considered England capable of surmounting a task so overwhelming, and the illnesses of Bowes and Ames, which put the former out of the match on the third day and the latter altogether, were only incidental factors, though the more sentimental observers would no doubt have given much to have been spared the sight of Woolley, in his last Test, in the rôle of wicket-keeper. England made 321, Leyland taking his third century of the series off the Australian bowlers, and Australia, to make assurance overwhelmingly sure, went in again and achieved 327. Those England players who had taken part in the Brisbane Test of 1928 no doubt recalled that the 708 which they were now required to score was 34 less than Australia had gone in to make

on that occasion. On a worn wicket England actually scored 145, and the futility of the proceedings towards the end must have thinned the ranks of the supporters of the time-limitless match.

The Australians lost only once on their tour, in the second Test at Lord's; and Hampshire and Yorkshire, each of whom got to within a few runs of them in the first innings, were the only counties to show much success against them, although Surrey declared at 475 for 7 before Australia went in and made 629. Bradman and McCabe made more than two thousand runs, four more exceeded a thousand, usually batting only once per match. Thirty-three centuries were divided among eight of them. Fleetwood-Smith, the left-arm bowler of googlies, enjoyed an August harvest which took his crop of wickets over the hundred mark. O'Reilly and Grimmett, of course, also had more than a hundred each.

Post-mortems can frequently be ungracious, and must only be destructive. England lost to a very fine side indeed. The result could only have been different if Bradman's birth-place had been Banbury, as distinct from Bowral; and if the parents of O'Reilly had arranged for his arrival in their native Ireland. I doubt if just one of these contingencies would have been sufficient.

#### ENGLAND LOSE WITH HONOUR.

It would be superfluous, in view of what has gone before, to emphasize the particular importance of M.C.C.'s visit to Australia in 1936. It is not too much to say that upon its success depended the future of Test cricket between the two countries. The result was a personal triumph for Allen, the man to whom M.C.C. had entrusted the vital task of captaincy. The trip, indeed, went without a hitch. Allen was not only the soundest of captains on the field, but a sincere and friendly spokesman off it. M.C.C.'s protest about barracking had borne good fruit, and a chivalrous atmosphere surrounded the team wherever they went. The cricket in the Tests was quite amazing. The wickets, in an unduly wet summer following an exceptionally dry spring, were even more variable than in the previous tour. Only one Test, the Fourth, was played without interruption from rain—perhaps a unique feature in an Australian series. Both sides were unsettled by illness and vagaries of form, so that the technical standard of cricket was probably a good deal below the average. That England could have gone so remarkably close to winning the rubber, considering all the circumstances, is sufficient proof of this contention.

Seventeen cricketers sailed from Tilbury under the managership of Captain R. Howard, the Lancashire secretary. Seven of them were incapacitated for long periods during the tour; two of the new batsmen, Fagg and Fishlock, failed completely to reproduce

their English form, while one of the four fast bowlers, Copson, was not considered good enough to be included in a single Test. Of the injuries, the most serious were those which prevented Wyatt from playing in the first three Tests and Robins from doing himself justice (though he went on playing) after the very first match. There was an unholy irony in Robins, perhaps one of the three best all-round fielders in the world, fracturing a finger of the right hand at fielding practice.

It was England's sketchy batting that let her down when she had discounted all previous form by winning the first two Tests. The lack of an opening partner for Barnett meant that Hammond had always to play an uphill innings. There was no Jardine to support the middle. How the captain must have sighed for Sutcliffe—and how Sutcliffe, as he listened-in at his native Pudsey, must have longed to be there! Forty-two did indeed seem an early age at which to relegate to the shelf the most successful of all English batsmen against Australia.

Australia, too, had her problems. The successors to the old partnership of Woodfull and Ponsford were shy in stepping forward, and some of the former weakness against fast bowling remained. But as soon as Bradman struck form his performance was so prodigious that it mattered little what was happening at the other end.

Never has a side been credited with a less hopeful chance than England when she took the field for the first Test at Brisbane. New South Wales had won a handsome victory over M.C.C. at Sydney, and an Australian XI had gained a moral victory there. Victoria had had the better of a draw. The start went all according to plan, McCormick, Australia's new bowler and a faster edition of Wall, shot out Worthington, Fagg, and Hammond in Brisbane's first treacherous hour. Leyland has proved a wonderful saver of England's fortunes, but never has he played a more valuable innings than at this black moment. Barnett met the situation with his usual strokeful aggression, and after he left for 69 Leyland nursed successive partners for four hours while Hardstaff, Robins, and Allen supported his great century. In the end England struggled to the very creditable total of 358. By the end of the second day Bradman had certainly been captured by Voce, but, in a stand marked by the utmost confidence, Fingleton and McCabe had taken the score to 151 for 2. Monday saw the triumph of Voce. Never perhaps has he bowled with such concentrated fire and accuracy as in this match. The more elderly spectators must have recalled F. R. Foster as they watched him alternately making the ball run away towards the slips or go quickly with his arm to dust the batsmen's ribs. Allen supported him nobly, and Verity's general steadiness was as invaluable as his bowling of Fingleton just after



he had reached his century. None of the Australians' last seven batsmen reached double figures, and England, no doubt somewhat dazed by their own performance, went in again 124 to the good. Allen himself led the way this time with an admirably determined innings of 68, while nearly everyone contributed something useful. In the end Australia was set 381 to win on a worn wicket, and Voce opened the final proceedings by bowling Fingleton first ball.

Overnight came the storm which had threatened since the beginning of the match. Australia had an impossible wicket to play on, and collapsed utterly for 58, Voce and Allen finishing the match in twelve overs. In a sense the rain was no friend to England, for it provided Australia with an alibi, whereas she seemed in any case doomed to defeat. The loss of McCormick owing to lumbago shortly after his initial success was, however, undoubtedly a vital handicap to Australia.

The gods smiled on England in the second Test at Sydney, for after Allen had won the toss and England had made 426, the rain came down and left Australia a false, though not a sticky, wicket to bat on. Hammond played an innings quite in the old vein of eight years ago, batting nearly eight hours at an average speed of thirty against an attack which was soon concerned rather more with blocking his strokes than with any positive notion of obtaining his wicket. The Australians had not realized at the time of Chapman's tour that Hammond was in some degree a one-sided batsman—possessing on the off a glorious range of cover-strokes made off either foot, and on the leg a relatively limited vocabulary. In 1936-7 one and all aimed at his leg stump, and not the least meritorious feature of this long vigil was the unerring discrimination with which Hammond picked the ball that *he* could safely play for runs.

On the Monday morning, Saturday's play having been restricted to an hour and a half before the rain, a further downpour had set Allen the problem of whether to continue England's innings, in which six wickets had fallen. He declared immediately, and within ten minutes Voce had justified the decision. With the last two balls of his first over and the second of his second he sent back O'Brien, Bradman, and McCabe, all three by catches at short leg off balls that rose steeply from the pitch. Recent Test history tends frequently to prove that whatever the respective merits of the sides in an England-Australia series the Australians are vastly the more vulnerable batsmen when the conditions befriend the bowler. This was an awkward, though not an unplayable, wicket, yet twenty-three overs sufficed to end Australia's innings. At 31 for 7 O'Reilly took his courage in his hands and lashed out at the English bowling. He landed three sixes, made 37 not out, and in doing so gave proof that already the pitch was quietening down.

Badcock was absent owing to illness and Australia's innings ended for 80. Thereupon Allen decided to enforce the the follow-on.

Since England won the match criticism of Allen's decision might seem to verge on the superfluous, yet rational deduction should at least be a secondary function of the historian. England led on the first innings by 346. Following the luncheon interval and a heavy rolling, there was every reason to expect the pitch to become wholly easy again. Had England batted and made only 200 Australia would have been set a task more mountainous than has ever been achieved in the last innings of a Test. Yet, were Australia to take her chance now on the recovered wicket, either wear or fresh rain or both might have made even a small number of runs unobtainable by England on about the fifth day. Putting Australia in again would seem in theory to have given Australia her one chance of recovery. In favour of the captain's decision might certainly be urged the moral effect on Australia of Allen's challenging gesture, but any moral balance must surely have shifted by nightfall when Australia's second innings score stood at 145 for 1, with Bradman going strong.

A googly by Sims soon upset Fingleton's wicket next morning, but an alliance of Bradman and McCabe so early on a hot day held forth dreadful possibilities. Here was the crux of the match, and it must be related that Allen's tactics in the management of his bowlers and the setting of their respective fields never showed to better effect. Bradman played himself in afresh and was batting in something of his old relentless mood when suddenly he decided to hook Verity, and perhaps, like more fallible mortals, lifted his head. At all events he missed a straight ball, and from this point onwards Australia, McCabe apart, seemed oppressed with a defeatist spirit quite foreign to her traditions. McCabe (93) continued to bat magnificently, and Chipperfield and Sievers rendered him fair service until tea. Afterwards Voce and Hammond found a deadly spell, and the last five wickets toppled down for 15 runs.

Two down with three to go, Australia refused to discard the bulk of her disappointing XI, and made but four changes, involving the return of Brown, the Queenslander and Lord's centurion of 1934, Rigg, Darling, and Fleetwood-Smith for O'Brien, Chipperfield, McCormick, and Badcock. There had been a published rebuke after the Second Test by the Board of Control against five named players of the Australian team, alleging undisciplinatory conduct. The players concerned had duly expressed their regrets, and henceforward there was no suggestion that Australia was not meeting her enemies with anything but a united front.

At Brisbane and Sydney it might well be suggested that the rain did no more than increase the margin of Australia's defeat, but at Melbourne it presented the match to Australia with both

hands. Bradman won the toss and on a dead, unhelpful wicket Australia had six men out for 130 before the first shower of rain fell. Next day nothing could be done until after luncheon, when, as soon as he had ascertained the character of the wicket, Bradman declared his innings at 200 for 9. England went in on a "sticky dog"—and this time there was no "Hobbs-and-Sutcliffe," not even a Sutcliffe. Hammond and Leyland batted skilfully, but when both fell to astonishing catches by Darling at short leg the collapse gathered swift impetus.

Allen declared at 76 for 9. It was suggested at the time that he might have done so as soon as Hammond and Leyland were out, and the follow-on had been saved. Australia thus would have had an hour's batting before bad light stopped play instead of the few minutes which actually saw the dismissal of O'Reilly in her second innings. The point, no doubt, is an arguable one, though Allen might very reasonably maintain that he could hardly have been expected to deduce either England's complete land-slide or the end of the unsettled weather. If the latter had continued, even the few runs in question might have proved invaluable. As it happened, after the week-end the wicket was quite itself again, and Bradman chose Australia's last chance to jump into his most masterly form. He batted all the third day and all the fourth, apart from a light shower or two on the third day which gave England a wet ball to bowl with. He was dismissed early on the fifth day for a score of 270, which was his third highest in a Test against England.

On the easiest of wickets Bradman and Fingleton were concerned in a record partnership of 346 which provided, from a technical aspect, some of the best all-round cricket of the series. England never flagged, and approached a hopeless fourth innings in cheerful heart. Leyland and Robins batted most attractively, England's 323 being rather less than half of the total required.

The Third Test had reflected little against England's strength, but the fourth revealed large holes in her armour. This time there was no rain, and of all grounds Adelaide is the batsman's paradise. Yet Australia, batting first, was bowled out for 288—which represented a magnificent piece of out-cricket. Farnes had been brought into the team, and added life and sting to an attack which had inevitably lost some of its freshness since Brisbane. Bradman again was bowled hooking, and McCabe once more was the mainstay of Australia. At the close of the second day England's reply stood at 174 for 2, with Barnett within eight of his first century against Australia. He had already batted more than four hours, yet even this represented a greater pace than either Hammond or Leyland could achieve. One of cricket's most shrewd critics stated at the time that England lost the Test by this timorous batting on

the second afternoon and evening, and, retrospectively, his judgment appears no less convincing than it did then.

The Australian bowlers began the third day knowing they still held a good chance at least of keeping England's lead within bounds. They quickly broke the third wicket partnership, and after Barnett left for 129 only Ames was capable of coping with the spin and accuracy of O'Reilly and Fleetwood-Smith. When England's last wicket fell for 330 the moral ascendancy had definitely passed to Australia. Australia's second innings was once more a case of Bradman, Bradman all the way. McCabe and a young newcomer, Gregory, helped him in stands of more than a hundred, and his own 212 was acclaimed as one of the more perfect expositions of the science of batting. England was set to score 398, an effort which, barring something highly exceptional from Hammond, was clearly beyond her powers. In fact she scored 243, and Fleetwood-Smith, by making his aggregate of wickets ten for the match, definitely came into his own as a Test cricketer. His speciality is the more dangerous because it is unique in modern cricket. Left-arm, and bowling always out of the back of the hand, his googly is a reverse of the normal—that is to say, the off-break action which spins away into the slips. In 1932 Hammond, of set purpose, had murdered Fleetwood-Smith when he played against M.C.C. for Victoria. It was a compliment which the Australian had taken four years to return.

At the start of the Fifth Test England was very weary; Australia, her idol now installed on a higher pinnacle than ever, aboundingly confident. Probably England's one hope was for Allen to win the toss. He lost it, and Australia made 604. This time Bradman was satisfied with 169, while McCabe and Badcock registered centuries and Gregory a praiseworthy 80. Farnes again was England's most destructive bowler, though Voce worked tirelessly. Upon Allen the strain had inevitably told and he not only bowled like a jaded man, but, in contrast to his brilliant fielding throughout the tour, missed two quite easy and vital catches early in the innings. A fabulous reply was England's only hope, and it was far from being forthcoming. Rain before the fourth day's play hastened the result. Nash, a new fast bowler, had a successful first match for Australia, and Hardstaff, with whom Allen had persevered in face of disappointing results, played an innings of poise and polish. The actual margin of defeat was an innings and 200. Bradman's part in the turn of fortune in the last three matches was to score 690 runs in five innings—and to win the toss three times running!

## CHAPTER XXVII

### ENGLAND *v.* SOUTH AFRICA: 1922-1935

ENGLAND was given a hard fight before she won the first two post-war Test series against South Africa. From both she emerged successful, but whilst on her own grounds her supremacy was overwhelming, in South Africa she had had to fight very hard for success. The African bowling at home was better than Douglas's team had found it, for Blanckenberg was now at his best; Hall, a good left-hand spinner, was effective at Cape Town as was the way with his type, and Nupen had his dangerous days. Taylor once again completely dominated the batting, and with scores of 176, 101, 102, and 91, even surpassed his grand record of 1913-14. The result was that, though England secured the rubber, it was only after a very hard fight. Easily outplayed in the first match, only a captain's innings by F. T. Mann landed her home by a single wicket in the low-scoring and desperately fought second. In the third and fourth the batting of both sides asserted itself, and no result could be reached. The last match was, by special arrangement, to be played to a finish, and a wonderful game it was. England led by just over 100 on the first innings, but made a disastrous start in the second, and 9 wickets were down for 149, when Gilligan came in. At the other end was Russell, who had scored 140 at his first attempt, and now, though very far from well, was once more defying the African bowling. Gilligan rose to the occasion nobly, helped to put on 92 runs for the last wicket, and saw Russell rival Bardsley's achievement of 1909 by making a double century in a Test Match. In the end the Africans had to get 344, and though Taylor once more made a great effort, they were eventually beaten by 103 runs. Of the English team, Russell had a great tour, and Sandham, though not a success in the Test Matches, was in all the others consistency itself. Mead made 181 in the third Test at Durban, but Woolley once again proved that matting wickets did not really suit him. Kennedy, with his considerable experience of local conditions, was by far the most successful bowler in the big games.

The visit of the Africans to England in '24 was attended by slender success. The greatest disappointment lay in the failure of their bowlers, Hall, Nupen, and Blanckenberg, to reproduce on turf

anything approaching their "matting" form. Pegler, not originally selected, but pressed into service on arrival, did splendidly, and was even more accurate than in 1912; but the general result was that the best English batsmen made runs almost as they liked. In batting, the Africans, curiously enough, did themselves more justice in the Tests than in any other games, and Catterall, with scores of 120 at Birmingham and Lord's and 97 at the Oval, beat all previous figures set up by his countrymen. Taylor, though probably he rather disappointed himself, was again acclaimed as a model for all young batsmen, a superb combination of strong back-play and powerful driving.

The result of the Test "rubber" against Captain R. T. Stanyforth's M.C.C. team in the English winter of 1927-1928 went a long way towards restoring South African self-respect. It is true that she did not win, and it is true that an English touring team from which Chapman, Hobbs, Tate, Hendren, and Larwood were missing could not have been considered representative. On the other hand, in certain directions it was a fairly formidable combination, and a great deal is due to the country that loses twice running and finally squares the series. Herbie Taylor was still the model for all South African batsmen, and Catterall the same forceful, engaging player that he had been in England. Men like Bissett, Vincent, Nupen, and Nicolson had reached their prime, while young men such as Cameron, the wicket-keeper, and Morkel held out promise for the next visit to England. Perhaps most important of all, South Africa found a strong and inspiring captain in Deane. England opened with a formidable quintet, comprising Holmes, Sutcliffe, Tyldesley, Hammond, and Wyatt, all of whom soon made themselves at home on the matting; but after that the batting flagged sadly. The one outstanding bowler on the mat, Geary, injured himself after the first Test, in which he took 12 for 130, and did not play again after the second. Thereafter the English attack rather lacked penetration. It should be added that Stanyforth (upon whom the captaincy devolved when Jackson, of Derbyshire, was prevented from sailing at the eleventh hour) not only kept wicket admirably, but proved a most tactful captain and a highly successful orator. Altogether it was a singularly happy trip.

Her tour in England in 1929 went a further stage towards restoring South Africa to the position she had won for herself twenty years earlier. H. G. Deane modestly proclaimed, when the team landed, that his team were "here to learn," and they certainly made great strides as the summer progressed. Defeats by Surrey, Gloucester, and Lancashire were not the most hopeful augury for the First Test, but they held their own well in a drawn match at Birmingham, and saved their faces at Lord's on a last day marred by a serious injury to Cameron from a rising ball by Larwood.

These matches had seen some admirable batting from the young men, Mitchell, Owen-Smith, Morkel, and Christy, and some fine fast or fastish bowling by Morkel, Bell, and a real tear-away speed merchant, Ochse, the pronunciation of whose name as "ooch" must have held a real suggestion of onomatopœia in the eyes of an apprehensive batsman. Leeds saw the defeat of South Africa by five wickets, England's batting having been vastly revived by the recall of Woolley (who made 178 for once out in his most overpowering manner, and took three cheap wickets). But Owen-Smith, with a glorious hundred and a last-wicket partnership of 103 with Bell, ensured that his team lost by no means without honour.

The bowling of Freeman (12 for 171) and centuries from Woolley and Wyatt, the latter the first amateur to score three figures for England since before the war, won the Fourth Test, but it was significant that whereas the young South Africans were learning, and not being disgraced in the process, England had had to turn again to the old guard. At the Oval South Africa had bowled out England on a plumb wicket for 258, and declared at 492 for 8, before Sutcliffe made his second century of the match, and he and Hammond, who also made a century, assured England of a draw. Deane and Taylor (the only "Over Thirties" in the side) no doubt sailed for home well satisfied. Their young men had advanced in ringcraft, and become at home in the Test atmosphere. As regards technique, well, Woolley had "learned 'em" by averaging well over a hundred for seven innings! And at Scarborough they had had a masterly taste of Hobbs himself.

Events four years earlier had suggested that, unless represented by her strongest side, England would have all her work cut out to win a "rubber" on South African matting in 1931-1932: and a variety of circumstances combined against the selectors. To the unavoidable omissions they chose to add Sutcliffe (aged only thirty-six, and a proved success on the mat) and Geary, whose bowling with Stanyforth's side suggests that he might have been a fair answer to Nupen. Chapman captained a team containing five other amateurs and fifteen men in all, to which number, owing to injuries and illness, Lee of Middlesex was for a time co-opted. The Tests ran a unique course, for after South Africa had won a thrilling victory by 28 runs at Johannesburg the remaining four matches were drawn.

The First Test deserves to be dealt with in some detail. Chapman put South Africa in, and Peebles, Voce, and Tate bowled nine of them out for 81, when a do-or-die effort by McMillan and Newson which turned out to be of vital importance, added 45 for the last wicket. England were always struggling against Nupen, and achieved a lead of only 67. Nupen bowled magnificently, breaking

back like lightning and scalding the thighs painfully as often as he beat the bat. South Africa replied with 306, to which young Bruce Mitchell contributed a highly promising 72. Voce again used the matting dangerously, and Hammond bowled all but as well as Nupen, but Peebles had gone lame, and everyone else was extremely expensive. The last innings was a fierce and protracted struggle. Hammond, with so much depending on him, played with the greatest care, while Turnbull contrived to make batting look much easier than most and played a splendid aggressive innings of 61. But the task always looked just a little too heavy.

The Second Test, on the fine turf wicket of Newlands, ended in a draw vastly in favour of South Africa, who, with hundreds from Mitchell, Siedle, and Taylor, compiled their record score against England—513 for 8. The first of the two Durban Tests was drowned out, though some sensational cricket on the last day might have ended in an English victory but for the classic defence of Taylor. At Johannesburg there was another great struggle ending in a draw, so that South Africa took the field in the fifth match at Durban in the comfortable position of dormy one. A most tiresome piece of ill-management here may well have contributed to the result. Chapman, as in the First Test, put South Africa in after rain, but when the umpires were due to go out it was discovered that there were no bails to fit the larger stumps. Chapman led his team on to the field, followed by the batsmen, but the umpires insisted on improvising a set of bails themselves. It is hard to imagine a more galling state of affairs for the challenging side, and they could not have been mollified when, after the Africans had kept their wickets up for more than an hour, more rain finished play for the day. South Africa lay doggo on the second day, scoring 252 at a rate of 40 an hour. England's efforts to force the game never looked very impressive, and another deliberate innings by the Africans ensured them the "rubber." The discovery of a first-class opening pair in Mitchell and Siedle, and the steady left-arm bowling of Vincent, were the most significant factors as regards the future from the South African point of view. The English team suffered from disorganization caused by illness, and the motor accident which prevented Sandham playing after the third match of the tour; also from the inability of a bigger proportion than usual to suit their technique to the mat. White, for example, found he could not beat his men in the air, and Goddard, who might well have been thought to be a nuisance with his big off-break, proved quite innocuous. And what made Sandham's absence all the worse was the fact that Wyatt's performance was unexpectedly modest.

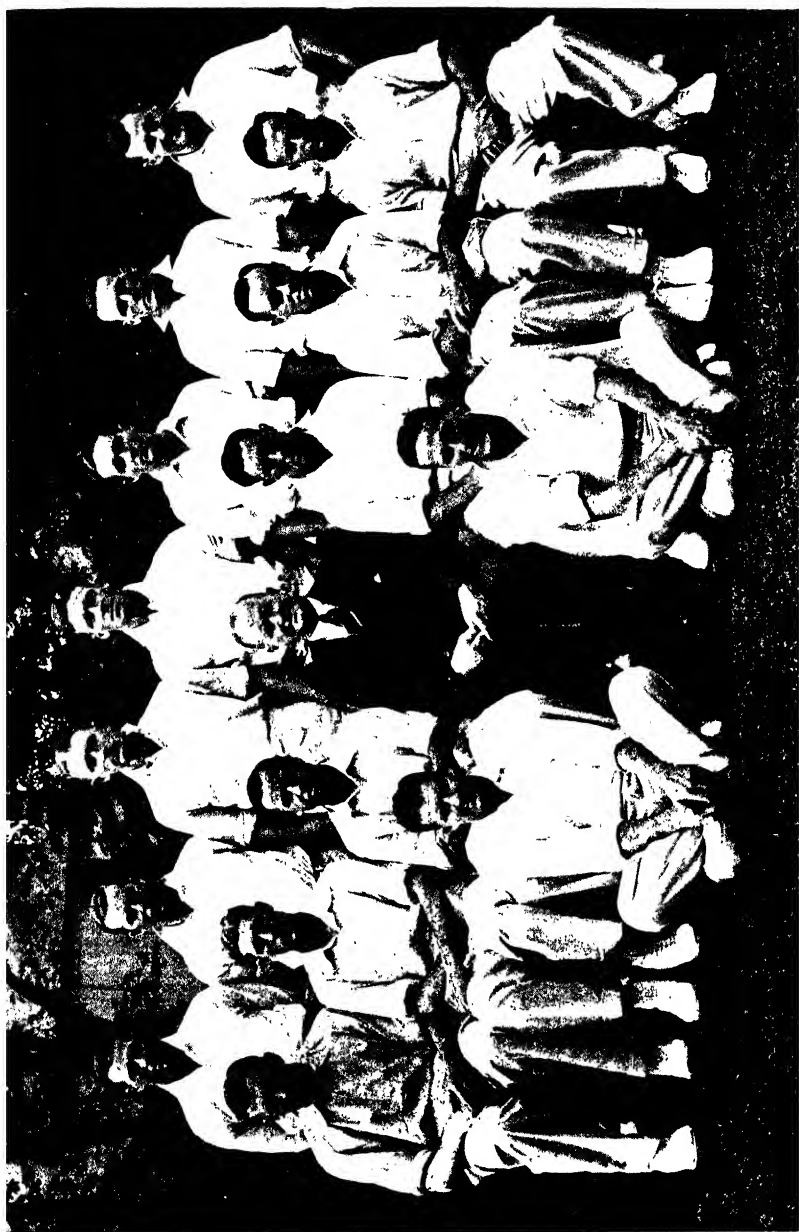
But winning on their own surface was one thing, success in England vastly different; and it was the English season of 1935



that firmly and, let us hope, finally raised South Africa to the status of "a first-class power." It would be idle to deny that Englishmen would have preferred South Africa's first victory in a Test in this country to have come at a time when, in the cricket sense, national pride was higher. England was licking her wounds after the murderous assaults of Bradman, Ponsford, and their comrades; well-loved personalities had emerged shrivelled from the battle; and there was no Chapman or Jardine to rally and inspire the home forces against a new foe. Some heroes of the former days had exchanged the sword for the pen, and certain of them in the transition had seemed to discard chivalry too. A new atmosphere was tending to surround representative cricket for which the ex-player-turned-writer could not disclaim some responsibility. In the circumstances it was particularly fortunate that the South Africans themselves, under Wade's captaincy, earned the greatest popularity. Indeed, without drawing invidious comparisons, it is safe to say no Dominion team has ever left more friends behind them after a visit home.

The poor showing of the South Africans against Australia immediately following may suggest to future commentators that South Africa's victory in this rubber was, as it were, a case of "not so mooch well bowled as baadly batted." That, however, would be doing them far less than justice. The Africans in 1935 would probably have come fairly near winning a triangular tournament on English wickets. They had a hostile and accurate opening pair in Crisp and either Bell or Langton (both of whom, being predominantly in-swingers, were beneficiaries under the experimental l.b.w. law); a most dependable left-arm bowler in Vincent; and two leg-spinners in Balaskas and Tomlinson who, if not consistent, were capable of a dangerous day. Their batting extended so far down the order that eight of them (an unprecedented number of visitors in an English season) made more than a thousand runs. Their fielding was uniformly excellent, and they were led with the most efficient unostentation by Wade. It was an unhappy decision by which a band of magnificent club cricketers (South African cricket takes place almost exclusively at the week-end) should have been called upon, directly after this remarkable effort, to embark on another international series. The tragic death of Cameron, their great wicket-keeper, and the inability of Crisp and Bell to play, ruined all hopes of South Africa putting up a successful fight against Australia.

The Second Test was the only one finished, and no doubt the South Africans would not have wanted their first Test victory in England to be achieved anywhere than at Lord's. They had had rather the worst of the weather and the match at Nottingham, having to follow-on on the Monday on a wet wicket after England





had batted all day Saturday on a plumb one. The batting of Bruce Mitchell and Cameron, and the bowling of Balaskas and Langton, were the chief factors in the Lord's victory. On the first afternoon, when the ball was already turning and South Africa was facing a crisis, Cameron played an innings that did the heart good to see. He had previously turned his attention to Verity at Sheffield, hitting him for 4 4 4 6 6 6 in one over. Now he did so again, and, when Verity was knocked off, the English attack, comprising Nichols, Mitchell, and Langridge, looked sadly thin. The continued faith in Mitchell as a Test bowler was, incidentally, an insoluble mystery to many. Cameron's 90 included three sixes, and lasted an hour and three-quarters. It was a gesture of offence which inspired South Africa until the last ball was bowled. England finished her first innings 30 behind, and Balaskas's 5 for 49 in thirty-two overs, well as he bowled, was a standing indictment of the pitch. Bruce Mitchell truly came into his own when South Africa batted again, batting five and a half hours for 164, an innings marked by unwearying patience and a quietly efficient technique. Mitchell stands up to the acid test of class—he can be extremely slow without being boring. He gave no catch in his innings, and however sharply the ball turned, or however little it rose from the ground, he rarely failed to meet it with a smooth, unhurried stroke. The bad ones he hit with safety and profit. His innings enabled Wade to declare, leaving England 309 to get in four and three-quarter hours. On paper England batted down to, and of course including, Verity at number ten. A great effort by somebody might have given the middle batsmen a chance of going for a win. A close finish, in point of time, if not of runs, was indicated. But South Africa won with 157 runs and a whole evening to spare.

The England selectors, not unreasonably deciding their team needed fresh blood, introduced Smith of Derby, Barber, Hardstaff, Sims, and Mitchell of Yorkshire for the third match at Leeds. Mitchell was discovered in the nick of time tending his garden when Leyland went down with lumbago on the morning of the match, and, in the manner of last choices, distinguished himself greatly. All these were new to a Test in England. However, though Mitchell batted with characteristic dourness in one innings and commendable freedom in the next, and Hammond for once in a Test looked like the magnificent batsman he is, three days was too short a time in which to blast through South Africa's batting twice. The Fourth Test was notable for a century of the highest quality by Robins which was sorely needed to redeem England's first innings, and a skilful and determined 124 from Viljoen, one of several young cricketers in the South African side who could be seen growing in stature match by match. England went for runs in the second innings (this was one of the more creditable phases of the series

from the England standpoint), but South Africa preferred to sit on her lead rather than risk losing it in attempting to score 271 at a little more than 70 an hour. Just to restore their own morale, the South Africans travelled straight from Manchester to the Oval, and in two days, on a fast wicket, beat a full Surrey side by an innings and 205 runs. Mitchell and Rowan scored 330 together for the first wicket. That performance, and the defeat of Yorkshire by 128 runs, were probably the outstanding ones of the tour.

The Fifth Test will always be remembered as being the only occasion in Test history on which one side has put in the other on a plumb wicket. In the last two series Wyatt had taken part in six drawn matches against South Africa, when the latter was one up on the rubber. He knew how difficult her batting was to dislodge when victory was a secondary consideration. Experience at Leeds and Manchester had given him good cause to doubt the capacity of the English bowlers to get out South Africa twice on consecutive days.

Supposing we batted all day Saturday at the Oval: supposing we bowled out the Africans by tea on Monday, and hit away until shortly before luncheon on Tuesday: the Africans are not likely (as we saw at Manchester) to take up any but the easiest challenge when by merely sitting tight they can become the first of their countrymen to win a Test series in England. And on what wicket is it easier to put up a successful passive resistance than the Oval? If on the other hand we put South Africa in, our bowlers might well find that little extra response that the Oval pitch sometimes gives at the start of a match. If it has completely dried out (a thing that can only be ascertained when play is under way), perhaps it may have worn a trifle by the third afternoon. In any case our bowlers will have had a good rest between their efforts. Of course, if it rains over the week-end, I will never hear the last of this from those who have the advantage of being able to criticize in the light of events. But the glass is high. I will trust the weather and take the chance. Thus may Wyatt have reasoned, and who (whether he agrees with the decision or not) shall deny the logic behind it? The evidence of history was against him, but in regard to this Wyatt may well have replied that he was not challenging the general principle but assessing the merits of a peculiar case. The normal presumption before the start of a match that one's opponents are as intent upon victory as one is oneself did not here hold good.

The course of the match did not, surely, confound Wyatt's theory, even if victory did not attend it. As it happened, the wicket played perfectly easily from the first ball bowled, and Siedle dug in all the morning. At the end of the day South Africa were 292 for 6, and England's bowling and fielding had emerged well

from the test. The score went to 333 for 8 on Monday before Langton joined Dalton, and the unexpectedly brilliant resistance of these two put the decisive spoke in England's wheel. Dalton had long been known as a beautiful stroke player, if defensively uncertain. His 117 on this occasion was the result of magnificent forcing cricket, and Langton (not out 73) was much more than a passive second string. England went hard after runs, and two splendid efforts by Leyland and Ames enabled Wyatt to declare at luncheon on Tuesday with a total of 534 for 6 and a lead of 58. There was certainly a worn spot or two to exploit, and South Africa lost her first three men for 67; but Viljoen and Cameron stopped any suggestion of a landslide, and that was that. The match had emphasized South Africa's right to the rubber, and it had also made it more than ever evident that three days are insufficient for a Test against South Africa on wickets such as these.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### OTHER INTERNATIONAL CRICKET

**T**HE year 1928 marks an important period in the world of cricket, for that summer saw the extension of the Test match arena to include the West Indies. And, the door being now open, New Zealand and India shortly entered the lists, so that instead of two international opponents the Mother Country found herself beset by five. The change has reacted in various directions. It means, for instance, that the age when two English summers out of four were purely domestic is now past, England has welcomed a team from the Empire every year in the last eleven. Many may well sigh for another season in which the County Championship and the Universities should claim sole possession of the first-class programme, and in which Gentlemen and Players once more should be the great match of the year. Some indeed might extend their objections to include a matter of principle. They might disapprove of the cheapening of the phrase "Test Match" to include contests which have sometimes proved no real trial of England's strength. Indeed in the light of experience it might perhaps almost have been wiser to withhold from this new Test field the title "England." For one of the functions of these lesser Tests had inevitably to be the finding of future material against Australia and South Africa. In this good cause established cricketers have naturally been shelved. The result is that nearly every county team contains several England blazers. Test finery is cheap, yet to have played against Australia remains, as, perhaps, it will always remain, the hall-mark of English cricketing ability. And, if the less notable Tests assist England's selectors to sort the geese from the swans, they accomplish a greater service to the other countries concerned. Their cricket is, and must be, the stronger for such an incentive behind it all as a tour "home."

The other half of the contract from an English viewpoint probably presents the graver problem. All these visits must be returned, and no winter passes without the departure of an English team to warmer climes. Such tours can be the most enjoyable experience of a cricketer's life, and no one would wish to withhold from the professional element the extra wages that accrue. There

is, however, a limit both to the number of players whose class entitles them to represent M.C.C. on a tour in the Empire and to the amount of cricket which it is good for the leading players to play. England's resources are in danger of being drained by a surfeit of international cricket, and one of the problems of the present is of fairly satisfying the claims of everyone while at the same time preserving the best interests of the County Championship, for it is upon the prosperity of this institution that English cricket in its present form depends.

### THE WEST INDIES.

Several members of the West Indies team of 1928 had been seen in England on a previous tour five years earlier; it was on the evidence of their achievements on this former occasion, as well as by virtue of the experiences of English cricketers in the West Indies, that three Test Matches were granted to them. But in fact the West Indies of '28 proved to be a substantially less formidable combination than the West Indies of '23, who had at least won a dozen matches and on occasion proved themselves equal to the best. The '28 team played 30 first-class matches of which only 5 were won and 12 lost. In the three Tests England got home with the utmost comfort with an innings to spare.

For the First Test at Lord's England paid her opponents the compliment of fielding a team which, except for Hobbs, who had been unwell, and Woolley, approximated to her strongest. As in their following matches, the West Indies showed at their best in the field. England on a good firm wicket scored 401, but the spectators of that performance left the ground perhaps as impressed by the fire and fury of the fast bowling of Francis, Constantine, and Griffith, and the lissom speed of the fielders, as by the art of the England batsmen. The West Indies batting depended very much on Challenor, who had been a great batsman in 1923, and upon Martin. Unhappily Challenor could not find his form in the Tests, and the West Indies never showed the ability to recover from an unsuccessful start.

The First Test was over before luncheon on Tuesday. The Second at Manchester lasted just about as long. In the latter the West Indies went in first and made 206. It was unfortunate but not uncharacteristic that both Challenor and Martin should fall through errors of judgment in running between wickets. Hobbs returned to England's team, and, pitted against his masterly technique, the fast bowlers seemed to shed something of their pace. Hobbs and Sutcliffe with a century partnership and Jardine with an 83 of outstanding quality led England's reply of 351. Then the West Indies fell completely before the flight and spin of Freeman



and White. At the Oval the West Indies, thanks to some magnificent catching by Chapman, made only 283 on an easy wicket. Hobbs made 159 quite faultlessly, and once more the West Indies collapsed, the game being over before luncheon on the third day.

The West Indies chose Canterbury to be the scene of their most impressive performance of the summer. Here they beat a strong Kent team by 201 runs. Kent, as on other occasions, showed themselves unduly fallible to fast bowling, but this time it was at least fast bowling of the very top class by Griffith and Constantine. Alas! A prolonged concentration of effort was beyond the touring team. Going straight to Eastbourne they fielded out while the Oxford Harlequins scored 676 for 8, thrashing the fast bowling on that easiest of wickets to all corners of the Saffrons.

In the winter of 1930-1931 a quite new project was carried out in the visit of a West Indies team to Australia, under the captaincy of the Cambridge blue, G. C. Grant. Again the chief characteristic of West Indian cricket proved to be a spasmodic brilliance frequently shifting to mediocrity. But the tour was by no means a failure, and the Fifth and last Test at Sydney enabled the West Indies to gain their first success by 30 runs. Centuries by Headley and Martin, two declarations by Grant, and a wet wicket for Australia to bat on in each innings were ruling factors in the occasion.

The results of the West Indies' next visit to England in '33 were a slight improvement on those of '28. Once again England needed only one innings in each of the three Tests, but though she won the first and third the West Indies obtained a lead of one run in a drawn match at Manchester. Moreover, this time a new batting star had arisen worthy to be numbered among the greatest in the game. Headley made 2,320 runs with an average of 66 in all first-class matches, including a century in the Second Test and six others. By any standards he was an outstanding batsman, with the superb wrist and eye of the finest coloured athletes, and, what is rather less common, a calm, almost phlegmatic temperament capable of stemming misfortune. In Grant the West Indies had an able cricketer and captain, who understood his men and proved himself an able tactician. The weakness of the side was an undue reliance on Headley as regards batting and a lack of bowling to support the efforts of Martindale. He alone represented first-class West Indian fast bowling. Griffith had grown slower with age, and Constantine and Francis were now engaged with the Lancashire League. Constantine did appear in five matches, and the moral effect of his presence in the field was, perhaps, even more valuable than his bowling.

In the Lord's Test, after England had made 296, the West Indians virtually lost the match in a vital hour and a half on the

second evening which saw six of their batsmen back in the pavilion for 55 runs. Roach, a capable, and at times a brilliant, opening batsman, made "a pair," and only Headley rose to any real heights.

Manchester provided one of its most deadly easy wickets for the Second Test. The match was notable for centuries by Headley, Barrow, and Jardine (the latter his first in a Test), and for the adoption for the one and only time in a Test in England of fast leg theory methods—by Clark on the one side and Martindale and Constantine on the other. These three bowlers all pitched the ball wilfully and persistently short, with a ring of fielders close on the leg side and either one or two on the leg boundary. The prevailing impression at Manchester among those who had not seen Larwood and Voce employing the short, bumping ball in Australia was that as a form of attack it was unedifying rather than physically dangerous. The cardinal difference of the pace of the Australian pitches and this Manchester pitch, however, prevented those who had not been present in Australia forming a definite judgment on this evidence. For instance, at Manchester, Jardine made a century, and a very fine innings it was in every way; but to allege, as was alleged at the time, that he had provided the classical illustration of how fast leg-theory should be played left out of account the vital difference in the pace which the bowlers were able to obtain off the turf, to say nothing of the lesser speed of the West Indies' bowlers as compared, at any rate, with Larwood. At Manchester Jardine met the fast short ball on his body with a dead bat back-stroke, even though the ball rose up to his shoulder. He did not hook at all. In Australia such strokes must frequently have carried to the short legs. To have himself played Larwood in Australia the English captain would have often found it necessary either to sway out of the path of the ball or to add the one missing stroke to his otherwise complete repertoire, the hook.

As it was, whereas a quick-eyed player like Headley always had an answer to Clark, none of the remaining English batsmen, except perhaps Robins, looked very happy against Constantine and Martindale. This match had important reactions, for although, as has been said, no accurate comparison could be made with Australia, it did cause a considerable body of knowledgable cricketers and critics to shift their opinion on fast leg-theory bowling, whether from ethical or aesthetic considerations or both.

The luck helped England to victory at the Oval. Her innings consisted of a hard-earned century by Bakewell of Northamptonshire (an accomplished opening batsman who, but for misfortune, might have stepped regularly into England's team as partner for Sutcliffe); some creditable batting late in the day by Barnett and Nichols; and numerous failures calculated to fill with disquiet those who remembered that Australia was due to follow next summer. The

honours of England's bowling were taken by C. S. Marriott of Kent, who, playing in his first Test, took 11 wickets for 96 by high-class bowling of the old-fashioned order, with a splendid length as the basis, and a trying flight and gentle spin as the weapons of destruction. It was pleasant indeed to note Marriott's triumph; but, with Australia in mind, not so reassuring to recall that he was thirty-seven and unfortunately a negligible quantity both with the bat and in the field.

In the winter of 1934-5 a Test series of four matches took place in the West Indies. The M.C.C. team, captained by Wyatt, was a powerful but not a representative one, and England, after winning the first Test at Barbados, lost the second at Trinidad, drew the third at Georgetown, and was utterly defeated in the last at Kingston. The First Test saw some astonishing cricket on a wet wicket. Wyatt declared England's first innings at 81 for 7 in reply to the West Indies' 102. Grant's rejoinder was to declare at 51 for 6, and England, fighting hard, reached the 73 necessary for victory for the loss of 6 wickets.

In the last Test Headley played a magnificent innings of 270 not out in eight hours. The West Indies having declared at 535 for 7, Wyatt promptly received a fractured jaw which caused his retirement. Only a century by Ames, and support from Hendren and Iddon in the first innings, saved an ignominious display against the West Indies' fast bowlers. This tour made it apparent that whatever the temperamental weaknesses from which the West Indies might suffer during a prolonged English tour, only the very best was good enough to oppose them on their own pitches and in front of their own enthusiastic and wildly partisan spectators.

#### NEW ZEALAND.

The New Zealand team of '31 was the second to visit England. In '27 Tom Lowry, the Cambridge captain of '24, had led a first invasion which justified itself admirably from every point of view. In '31 Lowry was again in charge, with equally happy results. Between these two visits A. H. H. Gilligan had, in 1929-30, led what might be described as an M.C.C. "A" team to Australia and New Zealand. There had been four Tests, of which England won one, at Christchurch, while the remainder, one at Wellington and two at Auckland, had been drawn.

This '31 tour was dignified by the appearance of three Tests on the programme. The first, at Lord's, brought great honour to the visitors, whose powers of recuperation were here proved beyond question or argument. It was a most interesting match, in which the fortunes shifted remarkably. Thus at the end of the first day

England had lost 7 wickets for 190 in reply to New Zealand's 224. On the Monday Ames and Allen added 246 in two hours and three-quarters for the eighth wicket, and England led after all by 230. New Zealand's recovery was magnificent. First Dempster (120) and Weir (40), and then Blunt (96) and Page (104) stood in England's path, so that on the third afternoon Lowry was able to make a triumphant declaration which required England to score 240 in two hours and twenty minutes. When stumps were pulled up at 146 for 5 no one could deny that New Zealand in her first Test had justified herself to the hilt. At the Oval her bowling, which was always the weak point, came in for rough handling from Sutcliffe, Duleepsinhji, and Hammond, all of whom made centuries. Then, after England had declared at 416 for 4, some splendid fast bowling by Allen shattered her defences. A characteristically stout-hearted innings by Lowry could not prevent the follow-on, and New Zealand succumbed early in the third afternoon by an innings and 26. The most encouraging feature of the final day was a very promising half-century by the eighteen-year-old left-hander, Vivian. The Third Test at Manchester was wholly ruined by rain, which allowed no play until three o'clock on the last afternoon. Although Merritt's leg-breaks were often highly dangerous, and Crompton had occasional days of destruction, even a high all-round efficiency in the field usually could not hide the limitations of New Zealand's attack. Her batsmen, however, enjoyed themselves immensely, with Dempster a squat, powerful-looking opener heading the list with an average of 59, and Blunt, Mills, Lowry, Vivian, and Weir also reaching a thousand runs, while Page finished only 10 short.

During the last six years New Zealand has been more fortunate than any other country in the visits of English teams. Jardine's M.C.C. Australian team called in on the way home and contested two Test matches, at Christchurch and Auckland, both of which were drawn. Hammond made 227 in the first and 336 not out (the highest score reached in any kind of Test Match) in the second, and the only inference to be drawn was that New Zealand's bowling, far from having improved, was conspicuously worse as a result of Merritt having defected to the Lancashire League. Next, in 1935-6 an M.C.C. team under E. R. T. Holmes repeated the itinerary of Harold Gilligan's side. Holmes's team, while lacking famous names, was strong enough for its purpose, even though all four of what were known as unofficial Test matches were drawn.

Among the New Zealanders, Vivian made the most noticeable advance, while several young Englishmen achieved distinction, notably Hardstaff, J. H. Human, Denis Smith of Derbyshire, and Sims. Allen's M.C.C. team that toured Australia in 1936-7

played on the way home at Christchurch, Wellington, and Auckland, the Wellington match being against "A New Zealand XI." To abbreviate the Australian tour by cutting out an up-country match or two, and stopping regularly at New Zealand on the return journey seems one fairly obvious way of easing England's cricket responsibilities. The tours of Gilligan's and Holmes's teams were as enjoyable and as successful as tours could be—except for the unpleasantly essential fact that they both lost a good deal of money.

New Zealand's latest visit to this country in 1937 followed very much the lines of the preceding ones. The difference lay in a bowling improvement reflected in the taking of a hundred wickets by Cowie, a big broad-shouldered fast bowler. The number of wins increased, so far as first-class matches were concerned, from six to nine, but, against three previous defeats, New Zealand on the latter occasion was beaten nine times. Lowry now acted as manager, though in fact he had often to play and contributed one notable century at Nottingham besides keeping wicket with much of his old ability. Page took over the captaincy, and under him the New Zealanders were just the same cheerful good sportsmen as had created so wholly favourable an impression on previous tours.

The Tests resulted in two draws and an English victory. At Lord's New Zealand saved the game after always having a good deal the worst of it, thanks to Roberts, a most useful all-rounder, Wallace, who made a half-century in each innings, and Cowie, who bowled splendidly. At Manchester, though England won by 130 runs in the end, there was a time when it looked as though New Zealand might achieve the glory of her first Test victory over England. New Zealand replied with 281 to England's first innings of 358 for 9 declared. In a half hour of bad light at the end of the second day Barnett, Hutton, and Hammond were dismissed, and next morning there was a point when with 7 wickets down for 75 England stood only 152 runs on. Cowie was bowling magnificently. But at the crisis New Zealand could not hold her catches, and F. R. Brown was allowed to make a dashing 57 after being dropped four times. In the seventy minutes while Brown was at the wickets the game switched completely round, and in the end the combination of Goddard and a worn spot caused a sad and unexpected collapse.

The Oval match was ruined by an almost blank first day, and, though there was a time when New Zealand seemed to be facing defeat, Moloney and Tindill pulled the game round and ensured a draw. The rulers of New Zealand cricket were no doubt quite happy as to the way things had gone. The loss of Dempster and Blunt, as well as Merritt, all of whom were playing in English cricket, and, perhaps more important, the semi-retirement of Lowry, had hit New Zealand's resources very hard. Yet this tour had

brought to light two able young batsmen for the future in Wallace and Donnelly, while Cowie was a real find.

### INDIA.

The last of the nations to be granted "Test status," India paid her first official visit to England in '32. There are internal difficulties surrounding Indian cricket concerning which it is not necessary to dwell at length. One outstanding handicap does however, attach to an Indian side, at any rate as regards a tour abroad, for, whereas it is considered essential that the party should be commanded by an Indian of high rank, to find, among the Indian princes, one whose skill matches his enthusiasm cannot always be possible. If some astonishing person were to appear bearing all the attributes desirable for the leadership of All-India, the achievements of his team might well make history. For that the Indian can be a cricketer of high natural skill would not be questioned by anyone who has seen men such as Amar Singh and Nayudu perform in England, still less by those with personal knowledge of the game in India. The captain of the team of '32 was the Maharajah of Porbandar, and it may truthfully be said that, while only playing in eight matches himself, he made a notable success of the task of keeping his men a happy and united party. The Indians were granted one Test. They went to Lord's with a very fair record, having won eight of their matches as against one defeat by Hampshire. Moreover, their defeat in the Test left them by no means without honour, and indeed better bowling on a good wicket has not often been seen at Lord's than that of Nissar and Amar Singh. England's batting rested wholly on Jardine, the captain, supported by Ames in the first innings and Paynter in the second. Jardine made 164 runs in the match for once out, and never were his merits more strongly emphasized.

Nissar, a youthful heavyweight with a long bounding run, bowled really fast and could move the new ball either way, but the greater of the two was Amar Singh, at his best the most dangerous opening bowler in the world. With his broad shoulders, strong tapering frame, and elastic delivery, Amar Singh made the ball move late in the air and like lightning from the pitch. These two were a nightmare to Holmes and Sutcliffe in both innings, and but for Jardine there could only have been one result to the match. The Indians supported their bowlers with fielding which often touched brilliance, in spite of mistakes, and the zest and love of the game which they showed made a highly favourable impression. The main fault of their batting was a lack of concentration which usually produced the fatal error just when a man should have been getting over the worst. Seven of the Indians made twenty-five or

more in the two innings, but Amar Singh's ~~death-or-glory~~ 51 at the end was the only half-century. Taking the side's batting as a whole, Nayudu was at once the most cultured and the most dangerous player. Playing in every first-class match, he scored 1,600 runs with an average of 40, in addition to bowling nearly seven hundred overs for 65 wickets at 25 runs each. Wazir Ali and his brother, Nazir Ali, and little Naoomal Jeomal also reached their thousand, and altogether the team, without setting the Thames on fire, gave the English public much pleasurable entertainment.

The return visit took place in the winter of 1933-4, Jardine being captain. An exhausting tour lasting from mid-October until early March contained only one defeat, and that by 14 runs at the hands of the Vizianagram's XI at Benares. Two of the three Tests ended in the most decisive victories for a strong English side, while in the remaining one India just managed to stave off defeat. To India's list of high-class players could now be added Amar Nath, who made a century in his first Test, and Merchant; while the most successful members of the M.C.C. team were Jardine himself, Walters, Valentine, and Barnett as batsmen, and Verity, Townsend, Clark, and Nichols as bowlers.

The tour of '36 emphasized afresh the particular difficulties attending a team of Indian cricketers. Inherently, India was probably stronger than she had been four years earlier, but the results were a sad disappointment. It is the plain, if dismal, truth that a side capable of winning only four first-class matches out of twenty-eight in an English season could not on its merits be granted three Tests. This time matters off the field did not go so smoothly as before, and in the middle of June it was announced that Amar Nath had been sent home by the captain, the Maharaj Kumar of Vizianagram. The seventeenth place in the team, thus rendered vacant, was filled by C. S. Nayudu, a younger brother of C. K., who arrived by air, while the occasional presence of Amar Singh, now a league cricketer, and Jahangir Khan and Dilawar Hussain, both from Cambridge, increased the numbers available to twenty. The result was that whereas a few of the essential players such as Merchant, Mushtaq Ali, and Nayudu got almost too much cricket, others went sadly short. The Tests produced two English victories and a draw, and the first two matches at least either showed India in a very agreeable light or England in a rather gloomy one. Perhaps the truth lay about midway between.

At Lord's, in a match constantly affected by rain, England found herself 13 behind on the first innings, whereupon she bowled out India for 93, and Gimblett of Somerset, a new star, and Turnbull made the 106 necessary after the first wicket had fallen for nothing.

Allen's 10 for 78 in the match and Amar Singh's 6 for 35 in the first innings were the outstanding performances. The second match added to the enormous tally of runs which has resulted from recent Tests at Manchester. After India had been bowled out for 203, England replied with 571 for 8. Yet India, thanks to an opening performance of 203 by Merchant and Mustaq Ali, both of whom made centuries, and a delay at the end owing to bad light, saved the day. At the Oval Hammond followed an innings of 167 in the Second Test with a brilliant 217, while Worthington of Derbyshire augmented his 87 on the former occasion with 128. After these two had murdered the bowling Nissar came back with the third new ball like the great trier he has always been; but this time Allen produced another devastating spell of fast bowling, and England won by 9 wickets before tea on the last afternoon.



## CHAPTER XXIX

### THE COUNTIES, 1919-1937

#### DERBYSHIRE.

**D**ERBYSHIRE lived through some precarious years when cricket was resumed after the war. Bestwick, the old fast bowler, returned and gave admirable service in 1919, culminating in an invitation to appear for the Players at Lords. The batting, however, was dreadfully poor, and 1920, Bestwick having temporarily retired to the League, was actually the most disastrous in the history of any county ever admitted to the championship. Seventeen matches were lost and the remaining one abandoned, and it was a case of Morton and Cadman toiling away with the dimmest prospect alike of support or success. Gradually things improved. Under G. M. Buckston's captaincy in '21 Bestwick, returning, took 147 wickets for 16 runs each—which for a pace bowler at the age of 45 are figures that have not often been approached. G. R. Jackson began his nine years' spell of captaincy in '22, and from here the upward tendency of Derbyshire proceeds with only one black year—1924, when W. W. Hill-Wood, the best batsman the previous summer, was unavailable and Garnett Lee had not yet arrived from Notts.

In '27, fifth place in the championship (Surrey and Middlesex being below them) showed the writing on the wall. A new generation of professionals was now usefully established. There were three worthy all-rounders in Slater, Worthington, and Townsend; Storer was also a very able batsman, and Hutchinson, who doubled his utility as a batsman by winning for himself a reputation as one of the best cover-points in the game. The attack was now consistent enough, but lacked variety; and this was forthcoming on the appearance of Mitchell, a miner who, so legend has it, was first seen bowling a natural googly in a rough game at the pit-head. In '29, when Mitchell first reached his hundred wickets, and Storer an aggregate of 1,500, Derbyshire, for some time stood at the top of the table. Mitchell's temperament, perhaps, has not helped him in representative cricket. For Derbyshire, however, his leg-breaks have been a match-winning factor time and again. To the fast-footed batsman he is death on all but the easiest wickets.

Upon Jackson's retirement, A. W. Richardson carried on the new and growing tradition of fine fielding and sporting cricket. Gradually Derbyshire's resources grew even stronger. Dennis Smith, a stylish left-handed opening batsman, reached the fame of playing for England in Tests; while Copson arrived as a fast bowler. By pre-War standards, perhaps, the latter adjective might be disputed, but on his day Copson is at least quick enough to arouse apprehension in some, as well as respect generally. Not perhaps constitutionally strong, he has always needed, and received, careful handling. On his best days his body-break from the off, combined with the going-away ball, and a fine command of length make him an extremely dangerous bowler. From 1932 to 1935, Derbyshire rose from 10th to 6th to 3rd to 2nd, their aggressive spirit in the latter year being exemplified at its best by a victory over Notts, which necessitated scoring 186 runs in the last innings in two hours on a worn wicket.

The way was well prepared, and '36 found Derbyshire proud and undisputed champions. *Wisden* showed that a similar honour was accorded them in 1874. In '36 Derby were an admirably equipped side. Two most useful all-rounders in the brothers Pope augmented their already ample bowling, and their fielding was a joy to behold. Of their batting it can best be said that, by methods that were usually attractive, they made as many runs as their bowlers needed. Richardson led his men with great dash, and the whole country applauded what was only the second victory, since the championships was extended to its present dimensions, of a county outside "the Big Six."

If Derbyshire had to surrender their title in favour of Yorkshire in '37, they could, at least, show a higher percentage of points than the previous year. Moreover, George Pope began to be thought of in terms of "England's missing all-rounder." He made 1,300 runs with an average of 35, and took 92 wickets in a side which was so rich in pace-bowling that the wicket-keeper probably stood back for two overs out of three bowled by Derbyshire during the season. As a bowler Pope has height and that extra lift off the wicket which is the property of tall men who bring the arm full over. His batting is based on soundly aggressive lines, his most impressive stroke being (and how good it is to write this) the straight drive.

#### ESSEX.

Two-day county matches, coupled with the fact that when G. M. Loudon was not playing Douglas was their only accredited bowler, combined to give Essex a moderate send-off after the War. Their batting, with Perrin, Gillingham, Russell, Freeman, and

Douglas himself, was usually adequate, but the attack was woeful. What with the Leyton wicket and the Essex catching, even Douglas was expensive. Moreover, it was some years before Essex began to field any very notable recruits. C. T. Ashton came in and out of the side as from 1922, and rarely failed to make his presence felt in one department or another, while a left-arm bowler, Hipkin, took a hundred wickets in '24, though he never was so good again.

Douglas himself was tireless and tremendous, and his was indeed a Herculean task. Having, perhaps, got rid of the first three men and seen a few catches fall to the floor, he would go on bowling while the ball grew older and older; and then when the opposition had made as many runs as they pleased, his stern defence would most probably be needed to tide over a long rearguard action. Louden, when he played, was also a swinger and a very late one, whose best ball had the effect of a fastish leg-break. Every county would pay unconscious tribute to Louden's ability by keenly enquiring, early on the first morning of a match: "Is Louden playing?" If he was not, they knew that only Douglas, or perhaps Reeves, if the wicket was wet, stood between them and a big score.

Now and again some particular feat by Essex would set the cricket world talking, and none caused such a stir as a remarkable victory over Sussex at Leyton in '27. In the fourth innings Essex obtained the 276, which Arthur Gilligan had set them to make, in just over three hours, with twenty-five minutes to spare. The occasion was a triumph for Leonard Crawley, whose driving forced back even the opposing captain from mid-off almost to the fence. Tate was twice hit by him full into the Pavilion. Crawley and Hubert Ashton made 114 in the last hour, and as he took out his bat for 176, Crawley was chaired enthusiastically by the crowd.

About this time H. M. Morris took over the leadership from Douglas, and Nichols and O'Connor first appeared. In '29 these two, with Russell, Cutmore, and Eastman (Cutmore an opening batsman and Eastman an all-rounder) formed a new and useful nucleus. Russell was, in style, a post-War product, in that his right shoulder was turned round to mid-off, and his range of stroke accordingly failed to include the straight drive. He was, however, far from being an inelegant player. He was a beautiful cutter and a master of every variety and shade of stroke off his legs. The extent of his run-getting tells eloquently enough of his value to the county. O'Connor has always been a mercurial player, in wonderful vein one day, and yet with surprising spells of unhappiness considering the sound basis of his style. If, however, O'Connor would sometimes seem at the mercy of his temperament, he can be a dashing, almost devastating, player, particularly quick and clever on his feet against slow bowling. To enjoy the reputation of being a *bête noir* of "Tich" Freeman was a distinction obtained by few.

Nichols provides a splendid rejoinder to any who may suggest that the modern cricketer is a soft sort of person by comparison with his elders. A fast bowler who is also a stock bowler, and a "saving" as well as a punishing batsman at No. 5, is a combination which few players have lived up to with such consistent effectiveness as he. Laboured in his action Nichols may certainly be, but, far from tiring easily, in endurance he falls little short of Douglas himself. The hall-mark of his batting is utility rather than grace; but once he is set, few are harder to remove. He has already performed the double event of a thousand runs and a hundred wickets six times—and only Tate, Jupp, Rhodes, and Astill have achieved a similar feat more frequently since the War.

Three years under Morris, of which only the last could not be described as progressive, were followed by a joint captaincy arrangement which has stood Essex in splendid stead between '33 and '37. The first of these years was a milestone in Essex affairs, for it marked the end of the County's association with Leyton, that somewhat grimy yet not wholly unattractive enclosure which had brought all the great cricketers, in their time, to the East Londoner's doorstep. Of many feats of run-getting there, perhaps the one that will live longest took place as late as '32 when, on as perfect a pitch as ever the oldest Leyton spectator had seen, Holmes and Sutcliffe broke the world's first wicket record by scoring 555. Having watched nearly every run of this amazing total, I can only add that, as the Essex bowling was that day, the strain was mental rather than technical—and also, as Sutcliffe has since revealed, in Holmes's case, physical, for he was troubled throughout by violent spasms of lumbago. Another orgy of runs took place at the expense of Essex in the first season of their new nomadic existence wherein, with the club's headquarters established at Chelmsford, they played their home matches in different quarters of the county. At Brentwood on a wicket containing various chemical properties, Kent made 803 for 4 wickets.

Essex at their best are to-day a match for any. In the bowling, Nichols has been aided, from time to time, by two other truly fast bowlers, Farnes and Read, while P. Smith can often be a danger with his leg-breaks; and Stephenson, when Army duties permit, rarely fails to spring a shock of some kind. The joint captains, T. N. Pearce and D. R. Wilcox, have been, beyond wise leaders on the field, the two mainstays of the Essex batting—Pearce until the end of June and Wilcox afterwards; while to trace the optimism which, in these days, pervades Essex cricket so thoroughly, one would, while giving due credit to these two admirable cricketers, also find a rich source in the present secretary, Brian Castor, under whose able management the "Weeks" pass off so pleasantly.

## GLAMORGANSHIRE.

It was some seasons after their admission to the county championship in '21 before Glamorgan might be held to have given statistical evidence that the distinction was deserved. Five victories in three years in a full programme was a disappointing reward for those whose money and enthusiasm had been responsible for bringing first-class cricket to Wales. On an August day at Swansea in '24, Glamorgan made their first impress on the competition. Lancashire at the time were going well for the championship, and the fact that they were two runs behind Glamorgan on the first innings in itself held no suggestion of disaster. However, when Lancashire went in to score 146 they were rattled out for 107, and South Wales chaired Ryan, the American-born bowler from Hampshire, from the pitch to the pavilion. It was a significant feature of the victory that the top-scorer for Glamorgan was a seventeen-year-old schoolboy from Downside, who, playing in his first county match, stood up to McDonald, and parried Parkin and Dick Tyldesley with all the assurance in the world. Turnbull has played many splendid innings for Glamorgan in the fifteen years that have passed, but none, perhaps, of such importance as his first.

Ryan, slow left-arm, could be a dangerous bowler. Mercer, from Sussex, was a tremendous trier of the fastish-medium variety, and the off-breaks of J. C. Clay, the captain, were unpleasant on a helpful wicket. The only class batting, however, was provided by N. V. H. Riches, a prolific scorer in the second-class days who was, however, in the forties. Clay's reward for much brave endeavour in face of disappointment came when in '26, for one wonderful spell in June, Glamorgan stood top of the list. Even in late July they were lying second to Yorkshire, and if this was palpably a false position, eighth place, and a record of nine won, nine lost, was, in the face of past happenings, a miracle. The batting now was stronger, with two Yorkshiremen, Bates and Bell, at the top of the averages, and C. F. Walters, a young Welsh amateur, moving surely up.

The position was still precarious, but Glamorgan might always achieve the improbable, and in '27 their one victory, obtained in the last match of the season, robbed Notts of the championship in the most sensational manner. In '29 Glamorgan had a desperate year, playing under seven captains in all, and finishing last; whereupon Turnbull took on the captaincy, which he has held with great distinction, whatever the fortunes of his side, ever since. Turnbull himself, who had developed at Cambridge into a watchful player, and a magnificent fighter, was from now onwards available to give tone to the batting, and the first good Welsh-born professional, Dai Davies, began to get runs. For seven years Glamorgan con-

tinued to keep their head above water, thanks not a little to Turnbull's zealous secretaryship; another Davies (E.) having emerged as an all-rounder, and Clay showing his abilities whenever he could play. Finally, in '37, Clay, giving a full season to the business, took 170 wickets, and Glamorgan, winning eleven matches, ended a well-deserved seventh on the list—above Surrey, above Lancashire, and above Kent!

#### GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

After the War the nucleus of the Gloucestershire side was provided by the five professionals, Dipper, Mills, Parker, Smith, and Dennett. Dipper was a most dependable batsman with whom a certain gaucheness of style could not hide a fine range of strokes, as well as a splendid defence. He played against the Australians in the ill-fated Tests of '21, and it was probably his constitutional limitations in the field rather than because of any want of class in batting that caused his Test career to be a short one. Mills and Dennett were length and finger-spin bowlers of the old order, and Smith an excellent county 'keeper; but the greatest of these five was Parker. He took his hundred wickets first in 1920, and he continued to be a great stand-by to Gloucestershire until his retirement at the end of '35. On bad wickets there has, perhaps, been no more dangerous left-arm bowler since the War, and there certainly has not been so deadly a combination as his with Hammond at slip.

Hammond first played for Gloucestershire in 1920, but an irregularity of qualification prevented his becoming a member of the side until '23. Since then, except for 1926, when he was ill (he would almost certainly have begun his Test career against the Australians in that year if he had been fit) he has been everything to Gloucestershire—a Jessop one day, almost a W. G. in endurance and stamina the next. Perhaps, among strictly post-War players, posterity will rank him greatest of all.

Hammond's batting is the result of complete purity of style allied to an exceptionally strong and beautifully-proportioned physique. He could have excelled at any game, and his choice is cricket's good fortune. There is no grander sight than Hammond "on the kill." The covers are his favourite country, and he is equally adept at all the strokes, whether off the front foot or the back, between point and the bowler. Fore-arms and wrists of steel generate a power in the off-drive that has never been excelled. It is this particular forte that has led to Hammond being often characterized as a "one-stroke player." In fact, like Jardine, he has every stroke but the hook in his armoury, and not the least of his virtues lies in the strength of mind that enables him to cut out any that he considers unsuitable for the occasion. In Australia,

in 1936-7, he actually came near to abandoning the off-drive because he thought it left too great a margin for error against the spin bowlers. As a fielder he ranks with the greatest, for though he cannot often be spared from the slips, he is actually equally brilliant anywhere. Finally, with that lithe action and perfect follow-through, he is a very good medium-pace bowler—if he had never made a run he might have been a second Tate.

B. H. Lyon assumed the captaincy of Gloucestershire in '29, in succession to W. H. Rowlands, whose quietly effective control had guided them into fifth place the previous summer. There was nothing quiet about Lyon. Indeed, his tactics were so daring and unorthodox that Gloucester and their leader soon found themselves surrounded by a glamour rivalling that of Yorkshire. Lyon was impatient of the formal, stereotyped rules of procedure which governed the conduct of many of the county teams. He began to think in terms of victory before the first ball was bowled, and the greater the risk his tactics involved the more he seemed to enjoy himself. Yet, if Lyon's achievements often verged on the sensational, there was always sound logic, and a brilliant grasp of the game, and knowledge of its players, behind his course of action. For any one game he seemed to "throw away" he could probably show six victories—where many would have been resigned to a draw. Lyon's influence, in fact, acted as a wholly beneficial purge to the state of county cricket. It must not be inferred that he alone of the various captains represented dash and enterprise. Fender was still in command at the Oval, and certain of the other counties were ambitiously and skilfully led. Lyon, however, was unique. He had, of course, a set of players well assorted for his purpose: the brilliant Hammond, Dacre, the New Zealand hitter, Barnett and himself, to force the pace; Dipper and Sinfield to provide the solid element; and spin bowlers, in Goddard and Parker, who did their work quickly, and thrived on daring work near the wicket, and experiments of field-placing. Above all, for his home matches he had good, natural wickets to work on. The concrete surface of the Oval, no doubt, would have defeated Lyon, just as it so often defeated the best designs of Fender.

The bare fact that Gloucestershire finished fourth in the table in '29 gives little idea of the challenge they made. Actually the championship was probably decided at Bristol towards the end of July when Notts, the ultimate winners, beat Gloucestershire after tremendous excitement by six runs. Had that result gone the other way the difference would have been sixteen points, as between these two. Then, when Gloucestershire had climbed to the top of the table again in the middle of August, Sussex beat them at Cheltenham by one run. The title had already been secured when, in the anti-climax of the last match of the season at Trent Bridge, Gloucester-

shire went down heavily. At any rate, Gloucestershire's fifteen victories were more than any other side could claim, and the same number in 1930, when Lancashire won, were three in excess of anyone else. Gloucestershire were runners-up this year—it may perhaps console some to realize that under the system at present in force Gloucestershire in 1930 would have won in a canter. The following summer Gloucestershire again were runners-up, this time to Lancashire.

A variety of causes, such as the gradual decline of Parker, the frequent absences of Lyon and Hammond, one owing to business claims, the other from injury or the calls of big matches, prevented them flying quite so high again. But the character of Gloucestershire's cricket remained, nor has it grown dim under the leadership of D. A. C. Page and B. O. Allen, Lyon's successors. Page, whose father "H.V." was a pillar of the side with W. G., met a tragic death while motoring at the end of his first season as captain, in September, 1936. Sinfield has taken Dipper's place as the "sticker," and not only scores most consistently but takes a hundred wickets a year with a type of bowling which if it does depend on the "new-fangled" swerve, at least allies to that debatable property the essentially old-fashioned virtue of an impeccable length. Parker has become an umpire, and Barnett has joined Hammond as one of the foremost English batsmen—a most engaging player with a fine free backlift and follow-through and a freedom on the off side that belongs to a less stereotyped age. Goddard, like Bowes, emanated from the Lord's staff, but with Gloucestershire he achieved a complete transformation of technique from fast bowling to slow. With his exceptional height, and the off-break, which he imparts with remarkably long fingers, he has been as deadly a user of a damaged wicket as any in England. Hammond himself is at his best for Gloucestershire. With them he unburdens his soul after the cramping days of Test warfare. He remains a symbol of the undying spirit of W. G. and Gilbert Jessop. No county can show three all-rounders to equal these.

#### HAMPSHIRE.

The character of Hampshire's cricket has never varied very greatly, nor indeed have their achievements often visited extremes either of brilliance or of mediocrity. The post-war seasons found in Hampshire a side hardly to be considered in the category of the "Big Six," yet clearly superior to most of the rest. The professional nucleus had thickened since before the War, while a number of more or less accomplished amateurs drifted in and out as their various duties with the Services or elsewhere permitted. Philip Mead made a mountain of runs season after season; while



Kennedy and Newman bowled away with altogether pre-War accuracy, over after over, two lonely apostles of length and spin—though both could swing the ball to suit their purpose—in an age of “seam and stunt.” Over all, the Hon. L. H. (now Lord) Tennyson presided with contagious geniality and optimism. They had their great days—as, for instance, when in 1920 they declared against Yorkshire at 456 for 2, and were only baulked of an innings victory by the weather. Hampshire were easy meat for no one, and if Mead took root the odds against a finish automatically became considerable.

The amount of bowling Kennedy and Newman were called upon to undertake may well be understood from their figures in '21—in which year they shared 340 wickets, whereas no other Hampshire player took as many as 40. A few years later Boyes, slow left arm, a magnificent short-leg and a most obstinate tail-ender, came to their support, while later still A. E. G. Baring, a fastish bowler with days of greatness, could sometimes take the load off their ageing backs. Otherwise, there just was no Hampshire bowling of any note until one comes to the present generation of Herman, Creese, Hill, and Heath.

One match contested by Hampshire should not escape mention in history. It occurred in 1922 at Birmingham, and was begun by the dismissal of Hampshire in eight overs by Howell and Calthorpe of Warwickshire, for 15 runs. In their second innings, with six wickets down, Hampshire were still behind. But their fighting spirit could not have been better represented than by George Brown who was not out, and by Livsey, the wicket-keeper, who followed at No. 10. Brown made 172, Livsey 110—the final total was 521—and Warwick were beaten by 155 runs! No county has in modern times possessed a more versatile cricketer or more remarkable personality than Brown, who was at once left-handed hitter, stone-waller, wicket-keeper, fast bowler, brilliant fielder, and insatiable joker! Brown played cricket by impulse rather than by reasoned method, yet his batting and fielding often held a hint of genius, while he was frequently on the fringe of England teams as a wicket-keeper-batsman. Not the least remarkable thing he ever did was to hit the first ball of the match, bowled by Fairfax and pitched to a perfect length, clean out of the Southampton ground when the Australians played there in 1930. It was a gesture which his opponents could not quite forget the whole summer.

The decline of the old professional stalwarts led to a climax in Lord Tennyson's last season as captain, 1933, when, in spite of an Indian summer enjoyed by Mead, Hampshire touched the melancholy depths of fourteenth in the list. Two seasons of captaincy by W. G. Lowndes and two by R. H. Moore saw a new Hampshire emerge, in which only Boyes remained. Kennedy, retiring to

coach at Cheltenham, played only in August in '35, while Mead's long service ended the following summer. With Arnold, McCorkell, the wicket-keeper, Potheary and Moore himself to make the runs, and the bowlers aforementioned, Hampshire, in '37, had recovered in spirit, if not in position in the table. Indeed, their reputation as an enterprising, aggressive combination had, perhaps, never stood higher. Their fielding, in particular, was a constant delight.

### KENT.

Kent had abandoned cricket in 1914 at the zenith of their strength and popularity. The resumption had to be faced without Blythe and Fielder, but otherwise much the same men went to the making of the new team, and the professional nucleus, headed by Woolley, and now including a leg-spin bowler in Freeman, carried on more or less in the form in which it left off. The Woolley-Freeman axis proceeded to hold Kent high and dry above the riff-raff in the county championship from 1919 until 1935, during which time, except for one brief descent to eighth place, Kent were never lower than fifth in the table.

In the first summer Kent actually failed only on the last evening of the season to finish on top. They had to beat Middlesex at Lord's, and with a quarter of an hour to go Middlesex wanted 23 to save an innings defeat, with two wickets to fall. Unhappily for Kent the ninth partnership consisted of a tough pair of fighters in Mann and Saville, who both proceeded to hit the slow bowlers to perfection after everyone had been in the gravest difficulty all day.

However, it was a good beginning, and it demonstrated, not least, that war had not blunted Kentish appetites for cricket. The crowds flocked strongly everywhere, their idol, of course, being Woolley, who was now unquestionably the finest all-rounder in the game. Kent's amateur strain was enriched by the arrival of four promising young batsmen in J. L. Bryan, C. P. Johnstone, A. F. Bickmore, and L. P. Hedges, the latter coming fresh from a triumphant term at Tonbridge. The following year two further Bryans appeared on the scene, R. T. and G. J., both, like their brother, left-handed. Godfrey Bryan promptly added his name to the list of those who have made their entrance in first-class cricket with a century—in his case 124 of the best against the Notts bowlers at Trent Bridge. In this year sixteen victories in twenty-six matches landed Kent fifth in the order, and perhaps that position barely expressed their capabilities in this first post-war decade as a whole.

The batting often touched brilliance, and the fielding generally was efficient, especially in the slips, where Woolley's telescopic reach enabled him to cling on to the widest snicks. Moreover, so long

as Woolley retained his bowling skill and Fairservice continued to take wickets at that deceptively formal medium-pace, Freeman's rising genius was well enough supported, even though the new Fielder was shy in coming forward. But when Fairservice dropped off, and Woolley became more and more nearly exclusively a batsman, the situation grew ominous. For although, three times out of four, Freeman was too much for the small fry, the stronger counties could fairly often find a man with the footwork and the courage to take him by the scruff of the neck. Kent's score-book during Freeman's best years time and again tells the story of the smallest counties falling headlong, while those with such masters of footwork as Hammond, K. S. Duleepsinhji, and O'Connor to start them off were apt to reap enormous rewards. For beyond Freeman there came only to be the plain, honest fast-medium of Wright and Collins, and the swingers of Ashdown, who was always an infinitely better batsman.

However, if Kent rarely put forward a prolonged challenge to the professional sides of the North, with their more intense methods of attack, their resources were ample for the preservation of those qualities the county has always stood for. Between fifteen and twenty amateurs took the field every season, and nearly all of them would have commanded regular places in any other first-class side. Indeed, the choosing of the team for Canterbury Week must always have been a most embarrassing business. C. H. Knott, a pugnacious bat and a magnificent fielder, was perhaps the most distinguished recruit of the '20's until Chapman (hitherto qualified for Berkshire) arrived in '26.

For the next few years the finest bowlers might well tremble at the approach of that boyish figure, testing the spring of his bat as he strode to the wicket. Chapman averaged 57 and 86 for Kent in his first two years, and in the second was responsible for one of the great innings of post-War cricket. When he went in against Lancashire, that season's champions, at Maidstone, Kent's score stood at 70 for 5, and Macdonald was sweeping through them in the way he had when he knew the opposition was not relishing the conflict. Chapman batted just three hours, and murdered Macdonald, Tyldesley, and the rest to the tune of 260! The faster Macdonald bowled, the more swiftly did the ball fly from Chapman's bat, the shorter he pitched the more ruthlessly did Chapman cut him, and hook him, to the furthest boundaries of Mote Park. It was not crude slogging, but a display of amazing power applied to a fundamentally sound technique. G. B. Legge, a typically attractive Malvern batsman, helped to add 284 in two hours and a half—before Chapman, in a final blaze of glory, chalked up his last fifty in fifteen minutes.

L. H. W. Troughton had resumed the Kent captaincy after the

War. He passed it on to Captain W. S. Cornwallis, who was succeeded by the 1911 Oxford captain, A. J. Evans. G. B. Legge came after Evans, and Chapman took over from Legge. How long Chapman would have retained his form had he not been made captain cannot be guessed at, but his decline as a batsman (he continued to field superbly near the wicket) coincided with his appointment. Thereafter the younger amateurs, among whom A. M. Crawley and B. H. Valentine were at once the most attractive and the best, had to assist Woolley with the "fireworks." Todd, a left-hander who had days of outstanding all-round ability, now lent a defensive note to the batting, while Ames succeeded Hubble, and proceeded to build up his unique reputation as a batsman-wicket-keeper.

And still Freeman went on and on! In August, C. S. Marriott would often give him real help, and Todd might suddenly "go mad." More often it was a case of his bowling almost through the innings, whatever its length. There are certain requirements of a googly bowler which go to make him a moderate stayer, measured either in overs at a stretch or years of service. Yet Freeman between 1919 and 1936 took 3,746 wickets for eighteen runs apiece with hardly a barren week, let alone an "off season." It is easy to draw morals unfavourable to the general run of post-War batsmen from these figures; but no amount of talk could disguise the phenomenal nature of the achievement. There was something grotesque in the way the little gnome of a man came rocking up to the stumps, and flicked one ball after another, all so nearly the same, and yet so vitally different, until the victim would either commit some act of indiscretion or, more probably, fall to his own timidity. Freeman had four distinctly different balls, for in addition to the top-spinner he bowled the googly in two ways. The amount of spin he put on to the ball while still maintaining a model length was extraordinary, but the most astonishing thing about him was his stamina. He has said that, however long the day, bowling never made him tired. And certainly, at his peak, his "nip" rarely left him.

In '35 Kent suddenly slumped to tenth in the championship, which was the lowest they had been for nearly forty years. The joint-captaincy arrangement between Chapman and Valentine, with each moving in and out of the team, was probably one factor, and the approaching end of Freeman was another. He lasted one more summer, and then both Chapman and he retired, and Kent began a new chapter on a subdued note. R. T. Bryan and Valentine led the side in '37; which was inevitably a period of transition. When the summer was over it was announced that F. G. H. Chalk would take over the captaincy in '38, and that Woolley, at the age of 51, would play for one more season.

Figures reveal that, over a span of twenty-eight seasons, Frank Woolley has made 57,379 runs, with an average of 41, taken 2,040

wickets for nineteen each, and made 890 catches. His runs have been exceeded only by Hobbs and Hendren (the latter by a hundred or two); while his all-round figures stand with those of Rhodes and W. G. himself. Yet there never was a cricketer whose worth was less adequately computed by facts. Woolley's batting has stood over three decades as the quintessence of left-handed grace. Technically one can review any stroke Woolley ever made, and discover that every ingredient is perfect. Whether he is flicking the ball deftly off his pads, cutting it with a flash of triumph through the covers, or driving it negligently yet powerfully through the outfield, he never transgresses the severely orthodox. The nose is over the ball, the right hand governs the bat, which swings straight and free through the line. A superb eye, and a wonderful sense of timing do the rest. Yet it is the majestic indifference of Woolley's demeanour at the wicket, perhaps more than anything else, which enslaves the man in the crowd. He has seemed to me to regard the bowler as an anonymous, if privileged contributor to his art. In his grandest moods it has not mattered who was bowling, or how. His reach is such that, when once he has gauged the pace of the wicket, the good length hardly exists. I will always regard the brief innings of 41 with which he opened the Lord's Test of 1930 as the most perfect piece of cricket I have ever seen; and the miraculous catch by Wall that dismissed him as an intervention of the Devil himself. Great batsmen come and go, but Woolley's batting has a personality that places him right apart. When he walks in for the last time something will go out of cricket which can never be recaptured.

#### LANCASHIRE.

Cricket at Old Trafford began again with all the appearance of prosperity. Certainly in 1919 Lancashire were not helped to practical success by their own proposition in favour of two-day matches, for exactly half of their fixtures were drawn. The following year, however, Cook having been demobilized, Lancashire ran strongly for the championship, which they only lost by that remarkable victory of Middlesex over Surrey at Lord's on the last day of the season. Cook and Dean enjoyed a wonderful summer, taking 274 wickets between them for fifteen a time. James Tyldesley's fast bowling and Richard's leg breaks were prominent factors in their support, while whenever Parkin came into the team from League cricket, Lancashire's bowling was the strongest in the championship. Their batting, with Makepeace and Ernest Tyldesley the biggest run-getters, was at least adequate—especially when R. H. Spooner, J. R. Barnes, and F. W. Musson were able to appear. Spooner, in two admirable innings against Yorkshire, made it clear that the old skill was still present, and it was indeed a misfortune

that he was unable to accept the captaincy of M.C.C. in Australia the following winter.

1921 and 1922 found Lancashire fifth in the table in both years. They were undeniably one of the strongest sides in the country, but they lacked, perhaps, something of the "killer" instinct of their great rivals across the border, while in brilliance they were apt to be exceeded by the best sides in the south. The Lancashire-Yorkshire match of '22 must be mentioned as providing one of the classic finishes in this dourest of all series. Rockley Wilson went in last to join Rhodes at half past six on the last evening, 24 being needed to win with half an hour to go. While Wilson stood firm, Rhodes jogged doggedly along until when five overs remained only six runs were wanted. But it had grown darker and darker. Rhodes played the last over knowing that a three would bring victory to Yorkshire. Lancashire crowded on to the bat—and Rhodes played an impeturbable maiden. Many cricketers in a similar position would have got out, and some others would have played for death or glory, and won the latter. It took a Yorkshireman, perhaps, to regard a draw as the proper objective. If Lancashire had presented a full pitch or a long hop, well, that would have been different. . . .!

There was a good case for maintaining that Lancashire would have won the championship in '24 but for a dreadfully wet summer. However, the season was memorable for them in two respects. It saw the arrival in their ranks of McDonald, the Australian—and it saw, for the first time since 1899, a Lancashire victory in Yorkshire. Here was another classic, with Yorkshire needing 57 to win with all their wickets in hand on the third morning. Rain in the night had made a sticky wicket, perhaps as unpleasant a one as was ever seen on an English cricket ground. Parkin and Richard Tyldesley took their chance with both hands, and in 23 overs had bowled out the champions for 33!

Lancashire were clearly building up for something, and the fruits of much labour came when they won the championship at last in '26. Whether they were a stronger side than Yorkshire there is no need to dispute. The old champions were unbeaten, whereas Lancashire lost twice, once at Bradford in a single innings. On the other hand, when their chance of winning the championship for the first time since 1904 came in sight, Lancashire showed a determination and an offensive spirit which could not be denied. It was an astonishing spell of batsmanship by Ernest Tyldesley which first set them on the road. In nine successive innings from the end of June onwards he made 1,128 runs, averaging 141, and including seven centuries in consecutive matches. In August, McDonald, Parkin, and Richard Tyldesley all bowled superbly, and nine of the last eleven matches ended in victories.

These were halcyon days for Lancashire cricket. 1925 had shown

a surplus of over £3,500, after £4,000 had gone on building and repairs at Old Trafford. The surplus on the first championship year was £10,000. For all the excellence of Ernest Tyldesley, the spasmodic brilliance of Parkin, and the continued efficiency of such men as Makepeace, Hallows, Watson, and Richard Tyldesley it was McDonald's personality which perhaps accounted largely for the boom.

Now firmly enthroned, Lancashire were not easily to be shifted. In '27 they were roundly criticized for what seemed to their critics a lethargic attitude towards victory. They lost only once, and it was a championship won on "first innings points." The one positive factor in their cricket was McDonald's bowling. In a wet summer 150 wickets was a splendid tally for a fast bowler. McDonald was not regularly as fast as in the dog days of '21 under the stern captaincy of Armstrong. But he had a reserve of pace which perhaps was an even more effective instrument. *He* knew that the *batsman* knew that a real snorter might hurtle down at any moment, and against those with no liking for a short ball he was a holy terror. And bowling successfully or not, McDonald, with that sinuous, sinister run-up and the wonderfully flexible action, was a permanent object-lesson to all aspiring bowlers.

Of Lancashire's three successive championships, that of 1928 was much the most convincing. Again it might be argued that enterprise was often at a discount, but at least Lancashire could point to fifteen victories in thirty matches, while they were not only undefeated, but rarely in any sort of danger. Moreover, for any lack of aggression the Old Trafford wicket was much to blame. Its pre-War character was now completely changed, so that instead of a shooting break-back from Walter Brearley the visitor could now be sure that even the speed of McDonald would be exorcised as soon as the ball touched the mild, over-treated turf.

Figures give the surest impression of the state of the wicket on which Lancashire's home matches were played. Ernest Tyldesley, Watson, and Hallows averaged respectively 78, 68, and 66 for the season, and gathered fourteen centuries between them at Old Trafford. In Charlie Hallows's benefit match there, Surrey made 567, to which Lancashire made reply with 588 for 4. Watson seizing the chance to make 300 not out, the highest innings ever played on the ground. Such scoring recalled the early experiments with Nottingham marl at the beginning of the century. That wickets of this kind were (and are) the worst possible influence on English cricket in general should be obvious, not the least of the harm being that they must imbue the average county batsman with the notion that if he does not get himself out he's "there for the day." The fair wicket is that on which the batsman feels he had better get at the bowler before the bowler gets at him.

McDonald and Richard Tyldesley, both inevitably declining, carried Lancashire's bowling on their shoulders for two more years. In the first of them the county were bracketed second with Yorkshire, Notts being the winners, while in 1930 a great "last effort" by these two brought the championship home once more. Again Lancashire were undefeated, and the ingredients of success were very similar. Ernest Tyldesley still kept his form, though Watson was on the down grade, while three of the younger professionals, Iddon, Hopwood and Paynter, fully justified themselves. Yet if no fresh bowling was forthcoming the anti-climax had to come, and the following three years saw first McDonald and then Tyldesley depart, and the county descend to an average of sixth place. Sibbles on his day was a dangerous new ball bowler, and when the seam and the shine had lost their value Iddon and Hopwood, both slow left-arm, had their spells of success. But these were no real answers to the fury of McDonald, the brilliance of Parkin, and the mathematical precision of Tyldesley.

Lancashire's attack, on paper, was no more impressive the following summer than it had been before; yet when all the world was following the triumphs of the Australians, Lancashire came quietly along and annexed the championship, almost before anyone could realize they had done so. No one would suggest that they were a great side in that summer, but they had a great deal of batting. Pollard and Booth, two right-arm fast medium bowlers, augmented the attack, and P. T. Eckersley was a sound and tactically intelligent leader.

The period '35 to '37 has been with Lancashire one of transformation. Ernest Tyldesley went into retirement at the end of '36, and Watson's efficiency fell with a bump at the same time. The captaincy changed hands, Lionel Lister, a Corinthian and an amateur international footballer, succeeding Eckersley, who had entered Parliament. Paynter, who had taken so long to blossom forth, and who was so nearly allowed to slip away to the League, was now the great batsman of the side, with Washbrook and other young men following at his heels. It was no time to think of championships, but intermittently at least Lancashire's cricket held much hope for the future.

#### LEICESTERSHIRE.

Leicestershire, after the War, had to fight and fight hard to maintain their existence, and one finds *Wisden* dismissing their affairs on one occasion with the terse comment that "on a season of such moderate play there is no temptation to dwell at length." The early years saw the old hands giving of their best, and the performances of King, who, at the age of fifty-two, scored a double



century, and of such men as A. T. Sharp and Benskin, were worthy of all praise. It was, however, almost a decade before E. W. Dawson took over a side in which were recruited several able young professionals to take the load off the shoulders of Astill and Geary. Shipman, Berry, and Bradshaw all brought a useful technique to the aid of Dawson's correct and polished style. Astill's leg-breaks and Geary's pertinacious and accurate attack were supplemented by the work of H. A. Smith, Skelding, and Shipman, all of whom, in their best years, worked up a good degree of pace. Geary and Astill, by reputation and statistic, are the greatest of Leicestershire cricketers. Geary's career has already spanned twenty-six summers, and the capture of two thousand wickets bears testimony to his skill. Never so devastating a bowler as Tate, Geary at his best had many points of resemblance—the great fizz off the wicket, the deadly going-away ball, the subtle change of pace, and, above all, the extraordinary accuracy. Astill's figures are even more impressive. Between 1906 and 1937 he took 2,428 wickets with an average of 23, and scored 22,648 runs with an average of 22. Where Leicestershire would have been without these two can hardly be imagined.

Recently two more professional batsmen, Prentice and Watson, have made good and notched their thousand runs along with Berry and Armstrong. In Dawson's place C. S. Dempster, the New Zealander, has scored prolifically and played many brilliant innings; it is a sad misfortune for them he can only give Leicestershire half his time.

#### MIDDLESEX.

The disappointments of the first Middlesex season after the War were swiftly forgotten in the sentimental delights of 1920, when, in the last match of Warner's captaincy, and on the last evening, they won the championship before the largest crowd that had ever seen a county match at Lord's. At the end of July such a climax seemed impossible. Middlesex reposed thoroughly respectably half way down the list, and though Durston had won his spurs as a fast bowler and Hearne had rediscovered something like his pre-War form, the bowling was still barely adequate. However, G. T. S. Stevens, who had played for the Gentlemen as a schoolboy the previous summer, had begun to assist, and if he could control his leg-breaks he might go through any side. He proceeded over the Bank Holiday week-end to demolish Sussex, taking thirteen wickets in the match for 60 runs. This was the first of nine successive victories, culminating in the final triumph over Surrey.

Nothing less than victory could avail Middlesex in this match, and when, an hour before the close on the second day, Fender closed Surrey's first innings with a lead of 73, it looked a very long

way away. A remarkable stand of 208 for the first wicket by C. H. L. Skeet and Lee enabled Warner to declare the Middlesex second innings, leaving Surrey to score 244 in just over three hours. From the outset Surrey attacked their task. Up to a point they had the better of it, and so long as Sandham stayed the odds were that at any rate they would not be beaten. But Sandham hit a full pitch straight back at Hearne—and a glorious catch by Hendren in front of the screen saw the back of Shepherd. From this point Stevens was irresistible. Surrey attempted in vain to change their tactics. Their last wicket fell forty minutes from time, and Warner was carried shoulder high from the field.

The batting of Hendren, the all-round excellence of Hearne, Stevens, and Lee, and the bowling of Durston were preponderating factors in the success. Hendren averaged 67 for Middlesex in 1920, and that is a vast figure for one who never played an innings that was out of sympathy with the game, and who did not enjoy the "advantage" of batting half the season on a super wicket. For the next seventeen summers Hendren proceeded to score for Middlesex with a consistency that no batsman has surpassed.

Hearne and Stevens thrived on a general state of discomfort against the googly. Indeed, at this time it is probable that Hobbs, who had of course mastered the googly in South Africa before the War, was the only man who could detect its approach with any certainty. The pulling round of the right shoulder, which came to deface first-class batting generally in the post-War years, was as much a reaction against the googly as against the vogue of the in-swingers.

The repetition of the success of Middlesex in the championship in 1921 was inevitably a less glamorous affair for the presence of the Australians. Again, however, the climax of the drama arrived with the Surrey match at Lord's, and this time Surrey, by winning, could themselves annex the honours. Once more the occasion produced some classic cricket. Surrey opened up with 269, thanks to a magnificent century by Shepherd, and then bowled out Middlesex for 132. Only Knight, with a characteristically delightful 74, mastered the bowling in Surrey's second innings, but in view of what had occurred 322 looked a mountainous score to make in the fourth innings. Lee left at 48, early on the third morning, and then Surrey strove for four hours and ten minutes before breaking the partnership of Twining and Hearne; 237 they added for the second wicket, and by the time this superbly correct piece of batsmanship was ended Surrey's hopes had fled. Twining made 135 (this was much the outstanding innings of his career), Hearne 106, and Hendren and Mann hit off the remaining runs at their leisure.

Mann's tenure of the captaincy thereafter was marked by brilliant cricket on occasions, rather than the day-by-day con-

sistency which makes champions. The bowling depended very much on whether Hearne was in good health—and upon the presence of a talented but irregular set of amateurs. Durston and Haig strove hard, and with the new ball were always liable to knock over anyone's stumps; but the change bowling was often indifferent. As regards batting it was another story, and here the solidity of the great professional trio was capped by the dangerous powers of Mann himself, who for several years was the hardest and most demoralizing hitter in the country. Mann's immense driving turned many a Middlesex match in the 'twenties, and it was probably never seen to better effect than in the Yorkshire matches at Lord's. Once he drove Macaulay over the Mound against the farthest wall of the Nursery, and on another occasion Rhodes to such a towering height into the pavilion that only the parapet which had since been built at the back of the top story prevented his repeating the unique achievement of Albert Trott.

G. O. Allen and J. L. Guise were followed by a highly promising Cambridge contingent headed by Enthoven, E. T. Killick, and R. W. V. Robins. When these three appeared together Middlesex had little enough to worry about. The amateur, however, was finding it more and more difficult, all over the country, to take time to play first-class cricket, and with Middlesex it was frequently the case that, whereas a splendid team lay scattered in the City and among the ancient homes of learning, the side that was actually representing them on the field had very palpable limitations. The full brunt of this situation was felt when Haig took over the captaincy in 1929. Both he and Durston (who gradually abandoned pace in favour of slow off-breaks) were showing the scars of war, and Hearne was more problematical than ever. I. A. R. Peebles now took much the same rôle as that of Stevens ten years earlier.

The googly was no longer the terror it had been, but Peebles combined with his spin an accuracy of length and deception of flight which teased the masters. When in 1930 a fleeting academic expedition to Oxford, and the call of the Tests, allowed him to play in only eight championship matches, Middlesex descended to sixteenth place in the table.

The next four years were a period of restocking. A fresh and probably a larger professional backbone was a necessity, and the Lord's staff was explored to find the right men. First Lee and then Hearne fell out, each with a great record of service to the county. Lee made 19,952 runs in his career for an average of 30, and took nearly four hundred wickets. Grace of style may not have been one of his virtues, but courage certainly was, and it may fairly be adduced that had he played half his cricket at Worcester or the Oval or some other ground where the pitch was a batsman's paradise, his figures would have borne a truer relation to his value.

Hearne goes down to history as one of the classic all-rounders. His talents have been sketched in another place, and it remains only to hand on to posterity the evidence of figures. He scored 36,852 runs, averaging forty, took 1,839 wickets for 24 each, and made 329 catches. One may well pause to consider what more he might have achieved but for the perpetual and wearing struggle against illness.

It was fitting that the new generation, which under R. W. V. Robins's astute and aggressive captaincy has done so much to restore a bright lustre to the name of Middlesex, should have had the inestimable benefit of a year or two in the side with Hendren, for the younger men must have learnt much from the shrewd ringcraft of the old campaigner, while he stood for them all to see as a shining model of faithful and willing service. His aggregate of 57,592 runs is second only to that of Hobbs, and his average of nearly fifty-one over all the twenty-seven seasons is actually a fraction higher. A hundred and seventy hundreds are included in this total, of which 3,500 were scored for England in the fifty-one Tests in which he took part.

In grace of execution Hendren's homely figure could not quite match the elegance of Hearne. Yet his batting pointed many an object lesson; the nose so well over the ball when playing forward, the intense watchfulness that marked his back-stroke, the correct placing of the feet for the cut and the hook, his two most brilliant weapons. Footwork! That was the basis of Hendren's play. The ease with which he chasséed out to the slow bowlers never hampered his balance when it came to making the stroke. He would never allow a slow bowler to dictate his own length—and, considering the amount he left his crease, the infrequency with which he was beaten in the flight was extraordinary. The temperamental virtues Hendren possessed in full measure; of few players could it be said so truly that he was as admirable in forcing victory as in averting defeat. The Lord's wicket provides a better schooling than most; in his case it encouraged a versatility that was not the least of his genius. Add to all his merits a perennial cheerfulness and a zest in the field which the hottest day could not quench, and you have the embodiment of all that is meant when a cricketer says, "He's the man for my side."

The climax to three seasons of enterprising and often brilliant cricket under Robins came with a fight for the championship in August 1937 which stirred the emotions of North and South as they had not been stirred since Warner's last summer. Four times within the last few weeks Yorkshire and Middlesex changed places at the top of the list until, with a week to go, Middlesex, a fraction ahead, had to play Notts at Trent Bridge and Surrey at Lord's, while Yorkshire's opponents were Sussex at Eastbourne, followed by Hampshire at Bournemouth.

As they travelled to Nottingham Middlesex had good cause to hope that, if to win in three days on the pluperfect wicket of Trent Bridge might well be beyond them, Yorkshire might equally easily be frustrated by the docile Saffrons turf. As it happened Middlesex were baulked on the last afternoon by a superb innings by Hardstaff, after having replied to Nottinghamshire's original 316 by declaring on the second evening at 525 for 9; whereas the Sussex batting crumpled quite miserably before Verity, whom they allowed to bowl (on a plumb wicket!) with a close-set field without making the first symptoms of aggression. Verity's 14 for 132 represented a mental as well as a physical triumph—and it won the championship.

There was never any solid prospect of Hampshire pulling off a surprise; while in fact the wicket Middlesex found awaiting them at Lord's was of such astonishing perfection that the Surrey match produced thirteen hundred runs, and, in the end, a wholly unpalatable draw. However, Hendren, in his last match there, made as admirable a century as could be wished for, and the memory of his exit will not be forgotten in the life-time of those who were present.

When the excitement surrounding the championship was at its height Robins challenged Sellers to a match to be played on neutral ground for the benefit of charity, whoever finished on top. This duly took place at the Oval, and if the combination of the worst of the wicket, the absence of certain essential players, and, perhaps most important, a strong sense of anti-climax prevented Middlesex putting up a performance which could be said fairly to represent the respective merits of the two sides, Yorkshire at least played some magnificent cricket, and several worthy causes were benefited by a share in over £700.

The modern Middlesex side is too well known to require close analysis here. In Compton and Edrich the county have been remarkably lucky to find two young batsmen for whom the future may well hold the most glittering prizes. Smith and Sims walk worthily in the footsteps of Durston and Hearne; H. G. Owen-Smith, perhaps the finest all-round games player in the world, has, alas! returned to his native South Africa; but the captain himself is, as well as a most engaging cricketer, one of the most virile influences in the game to-day.

#### NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

It cannot truthfully be suggested that there have been many occasions since the War when Northamptonshire were strong enough to strike uneasiness into the hearts of any but their own weak brethren at the foot of the championship table. They began again in 1919 without their two great cricketers, S. G. Smith and George Thompson, of whom the former had returned to the West

Indies and the latter had been attacked by ill-health. Wells, a persevering fast bowler, and Haywood, a forcing batsman of brilliant moods, represented Northamptonshire's sole claim to distinction. Within the next year or two Claude Woolley, Frank's brother, became a competent county batsman, and Thomas might have been a dangerous bowler of the fast-medium variety with a stronger side.

V. W. C. Jupp's arrival from Sussex in 1925 did lead to better things, for in him, at any rate, Northamptonshire had an all-rounder of the top class. In eight seasons out of nine Jupp took his hundred wickets and made his thousand runs, often being first in the race. His versatile batsmanship—he could lie low as skilfully as he could hit—was of the greatest value, while his bowling was a god-send. Jupp has always possessed guile, perseverance, and accuracy in full measure. On any wicket those well-flighted off-breaks might cause chaos.

As these words are written Northampton stand without a victory for very nearly three years. Jupp inevitably has given evidence of the passage of time, and the absence for two summers of Bakewell has deprived the side of an opening batsman who at one time threatened to play a big part in English cricket. Under the generous patronage of Mr. Stephen Schillizzi, Northamptonshire have been able to carry on, and it is only to be hoped that his optimism will be at length rewarded.

#### NOTTINGHAMSHIRE.

The history of Notts cricket in the first decade after the War can, I hope, be told fairly briefly without injustice to anyone. It is not that the period was fruitless; far from it. The personnel of the side and the evenness of its achievement did not, however, lend themselves to dramatic incident. Substantially, the Notts of 1919 was the Notts which had trooped off the field for the last time five summers before. A. W. Carr succeeded A. O. Jones, whose breakdown in 1914 had been followed by his sad death the same year from consumption. The Gunns, Payton, Hardstaff, and the new captain were the run-getters (Whysall did not return until 1920), and Barratt's fast bowling was augmented vitally by the googlies of Richmond, who for some seasons pursued the elusive art with prodigious success. Runners-up in '22, '23, and '27, Notts' average place for the ten years works out at fourth. Matthews arrived as a fast bowler of some skill, while Staples settled down as the stock type which began to be needed to support the increasing rotundity of Richmond.

In '27 Notts missed the championship on the last day of the season when it was all Lombard Street to a china orange that they would finish first. They had indeed only to avoid defeat from

Glamorgan in the final match—and Glamorgan had not scored a victory all the summer! The weather played Notts a brutal trick, giving Ryan a sticky pitch to bowl on, and the whole Glamorgan side rose to its opportunity of attesting that the most weakly worm may turn at the most inconvenient moment. In fact Ryan used the wicket with great skill—but Notts must have found an appreciation of it poor consolation for a notable effort frustrated.

At last the side was now undergoing judicious revision. Walker, a pleasing batsman of the Notts order, had succeeded John Gunn, while Larwood and Voce considerably altered the standard of the bowling. The former reached his hundred wickets for the first time this summer. Voce's development was delayed until he had finally decided that F. R. Foster was, in his case, a wiser model than Colin Blythe; 1929 saw him properly established with 120 wickets for 17 each—and the same year brought Notts their one and only championship since 1907. That Notts were the best side in the country that season could hardly be disputed. Against defeats by Yorkshire and Middlesex they showed fourteen victories; their bowling, even if Larwood showed the effects of his first Australian trip, was more menacing than any of their rivals, while the batting was most discouragingly solid, with Whysall the tallest scorer and George Gunn and Payton wonderfully fresh considering that their ages added up to ninety-seven! Carr led his men with the utmost determination and had devastating days as a batsman.

Payton dropped out at the end of 1930, but although Gunn retired at the same time he was recalled when Notts were suddenly and tragically deprived of Whysall, who died of blood poisoning. Keeton, a fine, sound player with an agreeable method, and a beautiful outfielder, stepped into Whysall's shoes, while Gunn's successor turned out to be none other than his son "Young George," who, without quite approaching the unique genius of his father, soon settled down as a player of character.

Unhappily, the rumpus in Australia, in which Larwood and Voce were both intimately concerned, did not blow over without a particularly disagreeable reaction as far as the Notts club was concerned. As has been already stated, the Notts committee were required by the Advisory County Cricket Committee to apologize for the bowling of Voce against the Australians and against Middlesex in August 1934. At Trent Bridge, during the Australian match the Notts members, as well as the general public, made their sentiments painfully apparent. During the winter a special general meeting, called by the malcontents, passed a vote of "no confidence" in their Committee, which promptly resigned *en bloc*.

When, however, the Advisory County Committee required an assurance from the club that it stood by the resolution passed by all the counties condemning "direct attack" bowling, and the mem-

bers had had time further to consider both the ethics of the problem and the fate of Notts cricket if the decision of the special meeting were allowed to stand, a further meeting, attended by more than two thousand people, gave the assurance emphatically, and followed up this by re-electing all but one of the former committee members who offered themselves.

Thus the appointment of G. F. H. Heane and S. D. Rhodes as joint captains in 1935, which had been made by the old committee, took effect, and Carr's active association with Notts ended. Rhodes played a certain amount in the following summer, but in 1936 and 1937 Heane alone shouldered the task of re-establishing the good name of Nottinghamshire cricket. A lack of change bowling, allied with the revived excellence of the wickets at Trent Bridge, has not helped to encourage a militant spirit, but on occasions (and notably at Canterbury in August '37, when Hardstaff won the game with a glorious century in fifty-one minutes) Notts have played thoroughly attractive cricket, and in Joe Hardstaff's son they have certainly found one of the most stylish and gifted of the younger generation.

Larwood of later years has, either from the unsuitability of so many of the wickets or because of an unsound limb or joint, usually been content with bowling at three-quarter pace. But, however he bowls his action, from the smooth acceleration of the run-up to the arched back at the last stride, the swift movement of trunk and arm, and the pounding of the left leg as the ball is released, forms the perfect model. Pace off the wicket, a pronounced body-break, and a late swing when the ball is new, all contribute to the making of the best modern fast bowler. When fit and in the vein he has clearly ranked with Kortright, Kostze, and Ernest Jones as the fastest of all time.

#### SOMERSETSHIRE.

Somerset, after the War, found themselves equally barren of money and players. They set about the problem thus created in the only possible manner, which was to find players who did not require payment. They were fortunate in discovering a rich vein of talent from the Universities, and this source of strength, plus a small but valuable professional nucleus, with the outstanding personality of John Daniell in command, combined to steer the ship into safe water. Accordingly, the finances improved, and a stronger playing staff could be maintained. In J. C. White, Daniell had as reliable a standby as any captain could wish for, a left-arm bowler of supreme accuracy who was actually more happy on a fast wicket than on a wet one. White may never have possessed the spin of a Rhodes or a Blythe, but in his own class as a master



of length and flight he has had no rivals. Robson, until he was well over fifty, supported his efforts nobly, while the batting depended upon a talented amateur contingent of which J. C. W. MacBryan, M. D. Lyon, T. C. Lowry, G. F. Earle, P. R. Johnson, and the captain himself were the most dangerous members. The cricket of each of these men had a personality of its own—the neatness and polish of MacBryan, the power of Lyon, the doggedness of Daniell and the classic grace of Johnson.

From early days Somerset had been the “giant-killers,” and in the post-War years they amply lived up to such a reputation. There was, perhaps, never as much bowling as the captain could have wished for, but most could take a turn, and in the holidays R. C. Robertson-Glasgow could manipulate the new ball with a skill capable of accounting for the best of opening batsmen. White succeeded Daniell in '27, and Ingle took over from White in '33. By now Somerset possessed one of the best wicket-keepers in the country in Luckes, a most stubborn pair of opening batsmen in the brothers Lee, and a pair of good honest fast bowlers in Wellard and Andrews. In '36 a new and remarkable star appeared on the horizon in Gimblett who, in his first match for the County on the little ground at Frome, made a hundred against Essex in a few minutes over the hour. Since then Gimblett has been seen in the England eleven in a minor Test and has for one season at least been loudly acclaimed—perhaps too loudly—as a great player. A splendid eye and a fine, aggressive spirit he certainly possesses; how much more the future holds I would not care to suggest. In '37 both Andrews and Wellard achieved “the cricketer's double”—and so long as they maintain their form Somerset's cricket can never fall below a high respectable level.

#### SURREY.

Surrey returned to cricket in 1919 with resources which ensured that they would possess at least the finest batting side in the country. Hobbs was at once the soundest sheet-anchor and most dangerous attacker a county could hope for; D. J. Knight was the brilliant best of an accomplished line of amateurs; and the staff contained almost an embarrassment of young men only too eager to make up for the four years by which their development had been arrested. The two-day plan, as might have been expected, was little use to a side whose home was the Oval, but if Surrey could not finish their matches there it was not for want of trying, and the opening partnerships of Hobbs and Knight were a feast for the eye. It is only necessary to say of Knight that, in point of beauty of execution, he was the more engaging half of the partnership. In his two brilliant hundreds against Yorkshire at the Oval he reached the

pinnacle of a career that had begun when he took the field, still a very small boy, in the first First XI match of his first summer term at Malvern.

Of many scintillating performances Hobbs's best was when, in partnership with J. N. Crawford, the Kent match at the Oval was won by the scoring of 96 runs in 32 minutes. Crawford's return, after nine years' absence, was dramatic in the extreme. Going in against the Australian Imperial Forces when Surrey's score stood at 26 for 5, he added 146 with the captain, C. T. A. Wilkinson (106), and when Rushby appeared, 45 being needed to save the follow-on, he lashed the bowling to the tune of 80 in 35 minutes, eventually taking out his bat for 144! The Kennington spectators had little cause for complaint in 1919; nor, indeed, for some time afterwards. Ducat and Sandham were rarely anything but attractive. Shepherd, with his almost lazy manner, could play the most brilliant cricket, and, as for Fender, his batting was beyond all laws.

Fender succeeded to the captaincy in '21, in which year, as has been explained, Surrey would have won the championship if they could have beaten Middlesex at Lord's on the last day of the season. He enjoyed twelve years of office, and for the first eight of them Surrey were never lower in the list than sixth. Rapidly Fender established for himself the reputation of being the shrewdest and boldest captain in England, and the way in which, with the slenderest bowling at his command, he upheld Surrey's position richly entitled him to the description. He used the same acute study of human nature to plot the downfall of some illustrious opponent as brought about the ruthless eclipse of a nervous rabbit. Against players of little experience Fender was a particular terror, and it was a sharp opposing captain who hurriedly called back a youthful amateur almost as he was leaving the pavilion door, on discovering that he was about to walk to the wickets in a school cap!

The Press and the public may sometimes have been inclined to attribute strategies to Fender of which he had no conception, and he was apt unfairly to be labelled as a "stunter." In truth the outstanding virtue of Fender's captaincy was the exceptional clarity of his judgment. This, combined with his love of a sporting gamble, was many times more valuable than any mere superficial cleverness. It added greatly to his personality of course that so many of his coups came about primarily as a result of his own cricket. Were Surrey wickets tumbling, Fender, as likely as not, would flaunt convention—orthodoxy—Providence with a demoralizing piece of hitting, in which the most brilliant wristy strokes might alternate with outrageous snicks. Did the enemy look rooted for the day, Fender's leg-breaks, plus, perhaps, a spectacular catch at slip, might well alter the course of everything in a quarter of an hour. As a batsman a superb eye and fine wrists enabled him to flaunt

the text-books. As a bowler he had the leg-break, the top-spinner, and the googly at his command, and he mixed them in the light of a painstaking knowledge of the habits and weaknesses of each separate opponent. Six times in his first eight years as captain Fender achieved the double; in '23 his only possible rival as England's best all-rounder was Tate. In all, up to the end of '36, Fender took over two thousand wickets for 24 apiece, made nearly twenty thousand runs, with an average of 26, and brought off 558 catches. For one who clearly thought less than nothing of averages and was destined to "carry" Surrey's bowling on the most heart-breaking of wickets these are splendid figures.

Hitch and Rushby were a hard-working and dangerous pair for the first three years after the War, after which Rushby defected to the League, being followed four years later by Hitch. Peach, a loyal, stout-hearted cricketer if ever there was one, polished up his bowling to negative these disasters, while Geary, also right arm and a brisk medium-pace, was for a brief spell a very good bowler with the new ball. Shepherd wheeled his arm over in an innocent-looking manner, often with results that seemed to come as much as a surprise to him as to his opponents; while when G. M. Reay of the Beddington club could come into the side, Surrey's attack automatically improved twenty-five per cent. Later, from Cambridge came Allom, equally valuable, but almost equally elusive.

But however thin Surrey's bowling might be, the wealth of their batting was an almost constant factor; 1923 may be taken as furnishing characteristic evidence of the county's batting strength. Knight (who only played a few innings in August) headed the list that year with an average of 53. Following him came Jardine, Hobbs, Sandham, Ducat, Shepherd, Fender, A. Jeacocke (a fine punishing bat), all averaging more than thirty, Abel (W. J.), and Harrison, each of whom scored at least one century each. The latter two could not even find a regular place in the side.

Towards the end of Fender's tenure Surrey tended, from various causes, to become more and more a professional team. There were a goodish number of the staff who came to be considered as indispensables—while only F. R. Brown and S. A. Block of recent University cricketers really demanded consideration. Among the professionals Strudwick, after a quarter of a century's outstanding service, handed over the gloves to Brooks. Gover and Sheffield joined the bowling ranks, and Gregory, Barling, and Squires staked, one by one, their claims as batsmen. While these changes were taking effect Surrey suddenly announced a change of captaincy. Jardine took office in '32 and retained it until the end of '33, when the fact that he was not able to appear with any regularity caused his retirement in favour of E. R. T. Holmes.

From his earliest days at Horris Hill, where he learnt his cricket under A. H. Evans, Jardine had stood out high above his contemporaries. As captain of Winchester in the year after the War he had made nearly a thousand runs and averaged over two hours per innings at the wicket, and already in method and temperament alike he could be written down a potential Test Match player. His record at Oxford was not particularly impressive, but there was never any question as to his class. With a classic stance and the straightest bat ever wielded in cricket, he was a superb back player and a master of on-side strokes; the off-side strokes were there all right, but a certain native canniness curtailed their exploitation. These assets were reinforced by a quick and subtle mind, a judgment mature even in his schooldays, a passionate love for the game and an iron will. Though not an athlete in the field, his quickness of eye, beautiful hands, and unshakable courage made him a gully of the highest class.

It is doubtful whether a more astute captain has ever led a side; for he was at once a master of field tactics and a fine psychologist. It is sad that Jardine's name should be so inevitably linked with an unhappy chapter in cricket's history, and sadder still that he should have known so much hostility and so little understanding among a people who have rarely failed to appreciate a "Bonny fechter"; for, Scot by birth, and in courage, caution, and tenacity, the Bruce, if not the Wallace of the cricket field, he had in outstanding measure the qualities that save lost causes, even if they do not lead desperate ventures.

By 1935 the change in Surrey's personnel was all but complete. A fine pair of wrought-iron entrance gates proclaimed the glorious memory of Hobbs, who no doubt passed self-consciously through them to his new seat in the Press box; Fender was finishing; and all the professionals of his earlier years had gone their ways except Sandham. He, indeed, stayed on until the end of 1937, when the Surrey Club saw fit to announce his departure in September—too late for the cricket world to make a personal gesture of farewell to a grand sportsman and a great cricketer.

Among Surrey batsmen Sandham may fairly be ranked only below Hobbs, Hayward, and Abel. His method was far removed from theirs, and, however well he was playing, he never filled the eye as did these three commanding figures. Sandham will rather be remembered as the perfect second-string, ready alike to subordinate his aggression to his partner's, or, in certain circumstances, to take the brunt of the work upon himself. Hobbs has expressed generously enough what he owed to Sandham, and the Oval *habitués* were never unmindful of it. Small-made and neat, Sandham excelled in the strokes best suited to his physique—the cut, the hook, and all

manner of deflection off his legs. Of the late cut he was an acknowledged master, while sometimes he would launch out on the offensive strokes off the left foot, revealing how well exceptional timing may make up for lack of stones and inches; 107 centuries and an average of 44 for 41,164 runs tell the eloquent story of what Sandham has meant to Surrey.

With Hobbs's retirement there went out of cricket the second great national figure the game has produced. To the non-lover cricket was symbolized by Jack Hobbs, his cheerful face lit by a serene smile, just as it had been by the bearded old giant who never met a photographer without a twinkle in his eye. Alike to the expert and the man in the street he was the epitome of batsmanship. Though the game was his profession Hobbs's standard of values was always qualitative rather than quantitative. At his best the mere amassing of runs did not particularly appeal to him. There is, perhaps, a danger that some of the present generation which saw Hobbs, inevitably more laboured, only in his last years, may be deluding themselves on this point. It may be interesting to any such to have Frank Woolley's opinion that for him there will always be two Hobbs—the pre- and the post-War—and that, though the later one was a very great player, he fell short by comparison with the first.

Hobbs cared most about the way runs were got and the condition of their getting. A great occasion, a difficult wicket, the opposition of bowlers of renown, these acted as a spur upon him, and gave scope for his genius to display itself. It is, I believe, indisputable that in representative matches Hobbs was more dangerous than in an ordinary county fixture on the most perfect Oval wicket. Under these latter conditions he was sometimes wont to improvise for himself the opposition that appealed to him by deliberately courting almost extravagant risks. But put him on his mettle in a great match, and you would see how superbly orthodox was the method with which he could wear down the attack, how supreme the resource, how equable the temperament. He, more than any modern batsman, except Frank Woolley, fused the old and the new batting. He had the footwork and the mastery of back-play and the "delayed-action" stroke that defied both the swinger and the googly; but, at the same time, he surrendered little or nothing of the freedom which made his driving and cutting reminiscent of a more attractive, if less sophisticated, age. Of all batsmen he was the most versatile; the glazed wickets of Sydney and Adelaide, the matting of Johannesburg and Durban only enhanced his reputation.

Since 1934 Holmes has brought a welcome freshness to the Oval scene. Like Fender, he has proved himself an ambitious leader; but, like Fender, he has had to combat lack of bowling, combined

with the dreaded excellence of the Oval wicket. Gover is the modern Hitch, and if he cannot match Hitch's athletic agility at short-leg he is no doubt his equal both in pace and tenacity. Gover with the new ball is a splendid bowler, varying the late out-swing with the break-back, and making one, every now and then, move away off the seam, while his extreme height causes an uncomfortably steep rise from the turf. If only he pitched a slightly fuller length he might indeed be mentioned with the great Surrey fast bowlers of the past. Fishlock, a left-hander, is the latest of Surrey batsmen to appear in representative cricket, while Holmes remains to refresh the memory with amateur batsmanship as it used to be before it was undermined by false doctrine and a slavish imitation of modern first-class technique.

#### SUSSEX.

The Sussex captain after the War, H. L. Wilson, was faced with the task of conjuring respectable scores out of a side which, apart possibly from the now declining Vine, contained no real batting nucleus. Sussex in the early 'twenties were essentially a cheerful lot, capable of beating the best if Wilson himself got a start—or Maurice Tate, who at first was primarily a batsman. A. E. R. Gilligan, when he succeeded Wilson in 1922, was faced with the same difficulty, though he at least had now a first-rate number one in Ted Bowley. Apart from him, with Tate becoming more and more of a bowler and demanding a lower place in the order in consequence, the side's batting was an only less inspiring reflection of the captain himself. Gilligan took his life in his hands, and so did the rest. But if high-class batsmanship could not be manufactured, high-class fielding could and, under Gilligan, himself one of the greatest of mid-offs, Sussex began to field magnificently. Thus for differing reasons the legend of Sussex attractiveness, born in the '90's, lived on.

The middle 'twenties saw the rise of the moderns—first Cook, who was in the very first flight of batsmen against slow bowling and once approached as near to the England eleven as a trial match; Wensley, the willing all-rounder, as true a native of Sussex soil as ever wore a Martlet badge; then the Parks brothers, Jim and Harry; the Langridge brothers, Jim and John; and Cornford, who has kept wicket so well since the sad death of George Street in 1924.

A. H. H. Gilligan succeeded his brother in 1930, and after a year handed over to K. S. Duleepsinhji. Duleepsinhji's two years of captaincy marked a new tendency in Sussex cricket. The young professionals just mentioned were reaching their prime, the captain himself was one of the three greatest batsmen in England. Tate,

in county matches at any rate, continued to be a match-winning bowler. In fact Sussex found themselves climbing nearer and nearer to the championship. All at once everyone seemed convinced that they could win it, and hard indeed did the team strive to that end. So long as "Duleep" was there, their cricket lacked neither attraction nor personality, but for a season or two afterwards Sussex were striving to fill a rôle for which they had no real sympathy. Since the tragic breakdown in "Duleep's" health, R. S. G. Scott, a fine all-round cricketer for a little, led the side for one year, and A. Melville in '34 and '35. Melville to a very large degree filled "Duleep's" gap at number three. Here was another vintage batsman whose every stroke was a joy to the eye. Under Melville, Sussex challenged again the supremacy of Yorkshire and Lancashire, but again were runners-up. With Tate's decline the match-winning properties of the team have weakened, so that, under A. J. Holmes's leadership, Sussex are under no temptation to revise the character of their cricket in the interests of points and percentages. It was significant that James Parks's great feat in '37, the scoring of 3,000 runs (he also took 100 wickets!), coincided with a much increased liveliness of style.

#### WARWICKSHIRE.

Warwickshire continued cricket in 1919 with questionable prospects, for Foster had met with a motor-cycle accident which prevented his ever playing again; while Jeeves, who had shown every sign of filling Field's place, had been killed in action. So that there was no bowling to speak of, and only J. H. Parsons and Bates, son of the Edgbaston groundsman, gave Quaife any very reliable support in the batting. 1920 was a better year, for the Hon. F. S. G. Calthorpe, having gone down from Cambridge, took on the captaincy and roused Warwickshire to seven victories, as against one the previous summer. Calthorpe himself "did the double," while Howell had trained on to be an excellent fast bowler worthy to be sent with M.C.C. to Australia. Where before the War every county had its fast bowler, and a good one too, the race has within the last twenty years grown all but extinct. Howell had all the attributes, strength, pluck, and control, but neither luck nor (for his home matches) a fair wicket to bowl on.

Through the 'twenties Warwickshire maintained for the most part a respectable if undistinguished position among the counties. In '24 occurred a crisis which served to prove that cricket interest in the county was still existent, if dormant, for in answer to a special appeal for funds £3,500 was quickly subscribed. The following season saw Warwickshire unusually prosperous. Parsons was now a professional, and he, Calthorpe, Smith the wicket-keeper,

Bates, and Quaife, in his fifty-third year, reached the thousand, while Santall earned fleeting fame by the then rare achievement of scoring a hundred against Yorkshire; Croom was useful, and a youngster called R. E. S. Wyatt distinctly promising. Howell still was to be relied on to "get a start" at most sides—as also to polish off the tail. And to these regular performers G. W. Stephens, N. E. Partridge, C. A. F. Fiddian-Green, and E. P. Hewetson at times gave valuable support.

Quaife's career, spanning thirty-five years, was ended, as it had been begun, with a century. In '28 he returned to make one last appearance, against Derbyshire at Birmingham, and at the age of fifty-six bade a dignified and splendid farewell with a quietly faultless 115. Howell having previously departed to the League, Warwickshire now felt the draught badly, for as Wyatt, by steadfast application, improved Calthorpe himself became less effective.

When Wyatt took over the captaincy from Calthorpe in '30 there was no change for the better, for, as *Wisden* somewhat morbidly relates, "not once after . . . May 15th did Warwickshire know the joy of victory." Within a year or two the Lord's staff provided Bowes to Yorkshire, Goddard to Gloucestershire, and Paine to Warwickshire; and Paine proved just as indispensable to his new employers as the other two were to theirs. Paine has never quite touched the heights as a slow left-arm bowler, because he has cultivated—it might almost be said the Edgbaston wicket has *driven* him to—a purely negative steadiness as his regular rôle. Whereas Verity may have bowled over the wicket on the leg stump against a particular batsman, or on a particularly hopeless pitch, Paine has tended to spin the ball less and less. Still, his perseverance and stamina have stood Warwickshire in good stead, even if his methods must bear some of the responsibility for the fact that (for instance) between the beginning of '31 and the end of '32 thirty-four Warwickshire matches were drawn out of fifty-six.

Mayer has for ten years been a good, honest pace bowler, not uncomfortably quick, but with the late swerve and the diversions off the turf, which as a rule are lost to speed pure and simple. Lately Hollies, a leg-spin bowler, has arrived to help these two, and in '34, when the latter was a novelty and Paine topped the English bowling averages with 156 wickets, Warwickshire rose to fourth in the table. Dollery, a youngster spotted by Arthur Mailey, began to show promise as a batsman, and Santall made a belated rally when it seemed that his youthful hopes had departed.

The prop and stay of the side, however, was Wyatt. His development from his earliest days with Warwickshire is worth studying as a heartening example of the fruits of industry and determination. An important innings by Wyatt is as laudable technically as it is praiseworthy from the moral standpoint. Slowly



he has mastered every stroke, and, when the occasion is really ripe, he can display them all almost with abandon—as in the Gentlemen's great performance at Lord's in '34. Yet he is perhaps better fitted by temperament for a less flashy part. His judgment and self-control in adversity are admirable, and when his deeds are judged in the cold light of a future edition a more certain greatness will probably be found to belong to him than, in the eyes of most, surrounds his familiar form at present.

#### WORCESTERSHIRE.

Worcestershire cricket needed a long time to build up its strength after the War. The influence of the Fosters remained to a certain extent, but in the field the famous family was represented only by the occasional appearance of M. K. They skipped a year, returning to the championship under M. F. S. Jewell's captaincy in '20. The results were somewhat disastrous and, although the fact that H. A. Gilbert was available in '21 led to a slight bowling improvement, 1922 found Worcestershire nestling modestly once more at the foot of the table. 1923 was an important year for Worcestershire in that it saw the arrival as a bowling force of Fred Root and the assumption of the captaincy by M. K. Thenceforward, with at least one member of the attack to inspire respect, to say nothing of encouraging the others, Worcestershire presented nothing like such an easy proposition.

Root it was who perfected the art of the in-swinging, which, when the ball was still glossy, and sometimes even when it was old, if the wind was in the right quarter and the air was a bit heavy, would dip unpleasantly at the last minute into the batsman's legs and invite a hurried stroke in the direction of three, four, or five attendant leg-slips. His pace varied from medium to fast-medium, and not only county players but even the Australians of '26 crumpled before him. From 1923 until 1931 inclusive, Root took more than one hundred and sometimes two hundred wickets for Worcestershire, the one exception being the year in which he was often called away for representative matches. In Root's first great year the trusty Pearson surprised himself and everyone else by taking one hundred wickets for the first time, twenty-three years after he had first played for the county. Brook, a slow leg-break bowler, took his hundred wickets in 1930, and no one else has done so since the War until Perks and Howorth have fulfilled their promise in the last few years.

Meanwhile, one very fine amateur and several very promising professional batsmen had come to Worcestershire's aid. First Gibbons arrived from Lord's to step into the shoes of Bowley, then Nichol, and then above all C. F. Walters, who qualified by residence

from Glamorgan. Walters took over the captaincy in 1931, running the side first as secretary-captain, and held it for five years. Unhappily nothing has been seen of Walters since '35; which is a loss not only to Worcestershire, but to cricket. His merits as a batsman are dealt with elsewhere in this book, and it need only be added that the Worcester ground, with its beautifully easy wicket, the velvet out-field, upon which the "Woods" and the "Jacks" are brought out when play ceases, and the beautiful cathedral background formed a proper setting for his gracious style. There was a time around 1933 when with Walters, the Nawab of Pataudi, Nichol, and Gibbons to begin their innings, Worcestershire were almost the strongest batting side in England. That happy state was soon disturbed, for Nichol died with dramatic suddenness during the Whitsuntide match with Essex in '34, the Nawab's health broke down soon afterwards, and Walters's last appearance followed.

Yet '36 and '37 were good years for the county. The Hon. C. J. Lyttelton formed a new and happy link between the County Club and a great sporting family, and from the moment he took over the captaincy in the middle of '35, the zest and humour which he brought into his job began to bear practical results; '35 found Worcestershire twelfth in the championship, and the following summer they occupied the same position. Now almost for the first time in the county's history, the attack, with Jackson, a medium-paced bowler, Perks, who is fastish, and Howorth, slow left arm, all taking more than a hundred wickets, was truly adequate. It was ironical perhaps that the batting should tail off—even Kimpton's advent in '37 did not make for any great improvement—but no doubt the winning of twenty-four county matches in three summers was quite sufficient to compensate those who had been accustomed to see Worcester piling up a heap of runs and their opponents rather more.

#### YORKSHIRE.

Yorkshire approached the first post-War season with many an inward quail as to the county's bowling strength. The side had depended, in 1914, upon three bowlers, Drake, Rhodes, and Booth, each of whom had taken a hundred wickets. Now Booth had been killed in action, and Drake tragically cut off in his prime a month or two before stumps were to be pitched once more. Rhodes, too, was a batsman by now: his re-advance with the ball five seasons ago was probably only a passing fancy. Nor could the early matches have proved particularly encouraging to the zealous attendants at Sheffield and Headingley. The old enemies, Lancashire and Notts, struck swiftly with a victory apiece. But, as at other times in

Yorkshire's history, the hour produced the man. His name was Waddington, and, although he certainly bowled with the same arm as Rhodes, his method was a strong enough contrast. Waddington, with his wild, flowing hair and his bounding, easy action, soon came to be spoken of as the successor in English cricket to F. R. Foster. That such a flattering introduction was never lived up to argued, perhaps, inequalities of temperament rather than skill. However as a county bowler, supported by Yorkshire fielding, Waddington was a menace, and by June Yorkshire were irresistibly in their stride again. For Rhodes had turned up trumps after all—142 wickets for 12½ runs each was his answer to Yorkshire's call. Not least, Robinson arrived to inspire the fielding, as well as to bowl very usefully with the new ball. The old brigade of Denton, Rhodes, Kilner, and Hirst was, moreover, now headed by two new men, Holmes and Sutcliffe. It was not until July that the youngster from Pudsey was sent in first with the elder man who had been struggling for his foothold on the ladder when the War started; but within a few weeks all Yorkshire knew that a great new force had arisen to uphold the county's honour. Against Lancashire at Sheffield over the Bank Holiday Holmes and Sutcliffe put on 253 by superb batting for the first wicket. It was a feat that established them as the pair Yorkshire had needed since the retirements of Brown and Tunncliffe. With a shrewd leader, as well as a splendid batting stand-by and a top-class cover-point in D. C. F. Burton (who had won his place before the War under Sir Archibald White), no wonder Yorkshire walked away with the first post-War championship.

The more testing conditions of a championship fought by three-day matches again in 1920 revealed, however, bowling limitations that the arrival of Waddington had only diminished. Still there was no good right-arm fast bowler, for though Robinson once snatched a brilliant victory over Lancashire by taking 9 for 36 in the second innings, his success proved to be only a flash in the pan. In August, with E. R. Wilson available after the Winchester term and Hirst free from his duties at Eton, Yorkshire were at their strongest. Even so, fourth in the table was the highest they could manage; '21 saw them rise one place, and in this year they might have been top again but for having the worst of the weather. Two more new men had arisen: one the prayed-for bowler of pace, by name Macaulay; the other, Oldroyd, a pre-War colt of the dourest propensities whose batting had now blossomed forth. Rockley Wilson took 51 wickets this August for 11 runs each. Every over he bowled was a monument to persistent, unfailing length; he was, in fact, a more positive and more imaginative edition of Armstrong.

Geoffrey Wilson, the Harrow captain of 1914, succeeded Burton in '22, and Yorkshire finished first. Hirst's great innings for

Yorkshire was over, but Rhodes was still one of the finest all-rounders in the country, and, with the advance of Sutcliffe, who had had two quite ordinary seasons since his brilliant beginning, Yorkshire possessed almost every ingredient they required. An astonishing analysis of 7 for 6 by Waddington against Sussex (all out 20) was the most sensational piece of cricket this summer. Another victory, in '23, was the most convincing gained by any county since the championship reached its present proportions. By August 18th Yorkshire stood champions with five more matches to play—and to lose, for all the position would have been affected. Their bowling, with Kilner now the slow left-arm rival to Rhodes, and Macaulay and Robinson, as well as these two, taking a hundred wickets for fourteen runs each or less, was enough to shrivel the weaker counties before the battle began. Yorkshire won twenty-five matches this year out of thirty-two, and lost only by three runs to Notts—for a wonderful spell by Kilner after tea on the third day had snatched the match against Surrey from under their noses. Waddington was only required to take 57 wickets in this season; Rockley Wilson, though bowling no less well, was hardly needed. It was a pity that the properly antagonistic demeanour of Yorkshire on the field at about this time occasionally grew so openly hostile as to jeopardize friendly relations with other counties. In '24 the climax was reached when Middlesex, after a particularly rowdy match at Sheffield, cancelled fixtures for the following season. The business was smoothed over, but Yorkshire took the hint to heart.

For every variety of condition Yorkshire had the corresponding bowler. As a user of the new ball Robinson had become dangerous by observing to the full two principles which might well command a more general obedience. He pitched it right up and made the batsman go on playing by bowling it straight. To a cluster of slips he served up what were practically swinging half-volleys; and, thanks greatly to the two-shouldered stance, he reaped a rich harvest. Yorkshire fared quite moderately against the others of the "Big Six" in '24, but the unfailing manner in which they murdered the lesser sides won them the championship.

In '25, under A. W. Lupton's leadership, they achieved their fourth successive victory, and were unbeaten in any match. This was a notable season in another respect, for Yorkshire folk showed their affection for a splendid sportsman, as well as a magnificent all-round cricketer, by subscribing the record amount of £4,016 to Roy Kilner's Benefit Fund. Seven members of the team made hundreds, the out-cricket was as excellent as ever, and Yorkshire continued to prosper. When at last the championship found another winner in '26, Yorkshiremen could justly point to the fact that the new champions, Lancashire, had struck their colours to the old by a margin of an innings and 94 runs, and that for yet

another summer Yorkshire remained undefeated. The end of the long period of invincibility came when Warwickshire won by eight wickets in May '27 at Hull—it was two years and nine months since Surrey had won a great victory at the Oval. Major Lupton relinquished his kindly yet firm control of Yorkshire at the end of '27, and, in the absence of a suitably outstanding amateur, the committee appointed Sutcliffe captain for the following summer. The action brought forth a deal of criticism, both on the grounds that a professional should not be saddled with the responsibility of leading the team and that, in any case, Rhodes's seniority should not have been overlooked. However, Sutcliffe, who was touring in South Africa, sent a cable respectfully declining the honour, and thus saved no little embarrassment. Whereupon the committee invited Captain W. A. Worsley, who for the next two years faithfully followed the traditions of Lord Hawke and his successors.

Now for the first time since 1920 the attack weakened a little. Roy Kilner died of enteric, contracted on his way home from a coaching appointment in India, and Waddington had not been re-engaged. Once more Rhodes stepped into the breach, taking his hundred wickets again at the age of fifty-one; so that, with Sutcliffe (85), Holmes, Leyland, and Oldroyd all averaging over fifty, Yorkshire sank no lower than fourth. In '29 Rhodes was still the best bowler, and Yorkshire had not quite the sting to prevent Notts gaining their first championship since 1907.

1930 marks the opening of a fresh era. Rhodes at last showed the strain, but not before he had spent one valuable summer introducing Verity to the arts of length and deception. Bowes, with the demeanour of a studious undergraduate, had emerged from the M.C.C. staff a dangerous bowler. He gathered his hundred wickets for the first time, while Verity finished the season at the head of the English averages, where Rhodes had been perched so long. A. T. Barber was captain of Yorkshire in this year, and in their history the county had had no better. Barber inspired the side by his personality, and by the excellence of his own fielding near the wicket; and only the weather, added to Yorkshire's regular contribution to the England team, prevented them bringing home the championship once more.

Like Burton, Wilson, and Lupton before him, Greenwood celebrated his assumption of the Yorkshire captaincy by leading in the champions. The weather hit Yorkshire so hard at first that they seemed to be too severely handicapped to stand a chance; yet, as soon as the clouds dispersed, they were winning match after match, and in the end had seventy points in hand of Gloucestershire, their nearest rivals. Verity and Bowes were a more dangerous *pair* than any since the War, and their accuracy was such that one end at least was almost always tight closed. Greenwood had seemed

likely to be a fixture as Yorkshire's captain, but early in '32 he found it necessary to hand over to A. B. Sellers, the son of a county player of the 'nineties, who not only batted promisingly but carried on the Barber-Greenwood tradition of aggressive fielding at short leg or silly point. With Mitchell, his cap askew, a picture of menace at any distance, Yorkshire managed to conjure up the old atmosphere that was typified by Robinson and Macaulay, two live-wires to whom it was never wise to trot the safest-looking single.

It was rather more recently than this that Sellers, emphasizing, in an interview that Yorkshire played to win, observed that with them cricket was "no picnic." Rumour credits one of the most illustrious of Yorkshiremen with adjuring a somewhat light-hearted schoolboy that "ye don't play this game for foon!" while it was another famous old warrior who unconsciously shed light on his own philosophy by declaring, of a former captain, that he was "far too nice a gentleman to play cricket." But these remarks only illustrate "the Yorkshire spirit" on the cricket field if they are not taken too literally. No game is so true a mirror of character as cricket, and the southerner will never achieve the same mental approach to the game as the man from the north. Without drawing invidious comparisons let it be said that "the Yorkshire spirit" is one of cricket's most precious ingredients. And if ever honest zeal should outrun convention I at least would always say it is better to err on the side of over-keenness than the reverse. The best tribute that modern cricket can pay them is the universal acknowledgment that, whoever may be champions, to beat Yorkshire is the acid test of ability.

The clash of North and South brought forth an exciting struggle in '32, almost for the first time since the last Middlesex Championship in '21. On this occasion Sussex were the contenders, and their challenge might have succeeded until the very end of August. Actually the title had been won again by Yorkshire when the two teams met at Hove in the last county match of the season, and the absence of K. S. Duleepsinhji, as well as Bowley and Wensley, hit Sussex hard; yet, as the match was played, the contrast in resolution provided by the two teams must have convinced the most fervid southerner that the honours had gone to the right place.

In '33 Yorkshire won the championship by August 18th; following which came a remarkable land-slide wherein, within a fortnight, the team lost to Kent and Sussex, the latter by an innings, and were beaten on the first innings by Surrey (who scored 560 for 6 at the Oval against an attack depleted by the absence of Bowes) and Worcestershire. Even so there was plenty of daylight between first and second at the finish. The reliability upon Bowes and Verity was emphasized to Yorkshire's discomfiture in '34. The Australian visit meant that they both missed more than a

third of the county fixtures, and, with Macaulay only a shadow of himself, the bowling was definitely weak. Smailes was useful with the new ball; the ground staff and the Yorkshire Council were scoured in vain for someone to help him. With the South African Tests occupying only three days each, Bowes and Verity landed the championship again in '35. Bowes had by now perfected what may be described as a smooth and effective second gear, which he used whenever there was no especial merit in sheer pace. A little over medium through the air, he seemed to lose little if anything in speed off the wicket, bowled a beautiful length, and was always making the ball rise abruptly off the pitch and move away into the slips. Verity was showing the effects of much hard touring, and was inclined to be mechanical—but his accuracy, plus Yorkshire's fielding and Sellers's shrewd grasp, were enough to account for most sides.

There was one sensation connected with Yorkshire this year, when at the end of July Essex went up to Huddersfield and bowled them out for 31 and 99. Two fast bowlers, H. D. Read and Nichols, found a pitch with a nip of life—but not so much as to prevent Essex making 334 against Bowes—and Yorkshire's first and only defeat of the season by another county came by one o'clock on the second day. Nor was it uncharacteristic that they should win the following six matches off the reel, losing only three second innings wickets in the process! Their batting, with Sutcliffe, though an avowed enemy of it, triumphing over the new law of l.b.w. after a season's difficulty, and the persevering Wood helping himself to a thousand runs for the first time, was as dependable as ever, if a little less brilliant than in the period when Holmes, Kilner, and Leyland overlapped. No member of the team was a more typical disciple of Yorkshire than Wood, who has almost invariably made runs when they were wanted, and improved season by season as a 'keeper. When he was rested in the last match of '35 it was discovered to be the first time he had been absent from a championship match since he had succeeded Arthur Dolphin eight years before.

In '36 Yorkshire were third to Derbyshire and Middlesex, and, though everyone must have been pleased to see the honours descending on one of the smaller sides, it was a significant fact that on twelve days in the summer Yorkshire could not bowl a ball. The most important feature of the Yorkshire season was the arrival of two most promising young batsmen, Hutton and N. W. D. Yardley. The former, a fellow-resident of Pudsey and protégé of Sutcliffe, had played a number of innings in the preceding two years. He finally clinched his place in the team at the age of twenty, and began a first-wicket partnership with Sutcliffe which no doubt has been of greater value than any amount of theoretical discussion. At twenty-one Hutton was chosen for the Test series against New

Zealand, and after a nervous beginning at Lord's made a century at Manchester. There is, as is natural, a good deal of Sutcliffe about him, and he seems to have captured the secret of that splendid mental poise which is probably the great batsman's most remarkable attribute. Hutton has inherited much of the watchful, unwavering defence that has broken many a bowler's heart, the skill in the hook, and, not least, the forcing cover-strokes off the back foot. A future edition of this History will no doubt add much achievement to the rich promise that is here held out. Yardley was a precociously brilliant games-player of all descriptions at St. Peter's, York, and before his twenty-third birthday he has scored a thousand runs for Yorkshire in the Cambridge vacations with an average of nearly forty, made a century in the University Match, and taken a most successful part in a tour of India with Lord Tennyson. As with Hutton, class is inseparable from his batting.

The most exciting race for the championship since 1920 charged August 1937 with an intense excitement which came as a welcome reminder that "Test Matches are not everything." Early in the season the absence of Bowes with a bad knee exposed Yorkshire's lack of reserve bowling talent more emphatically than it had ever been exposed before. In the course of a week Warwickshire and Sussex both obtained a first innings lead against Yorkshire after fielding out to scores of 492 and 465 respectively. Mercifully Bowes recovered, and Yorkshire pulled themselves together. How they won in the end has already been described.



## CHAPTER XXX

### AMATEUR CRICKET, 1919-1937

#### GENTLEMEN AND PLAYERS

THE meeting of the Gentlemen and the Players at Lord's in 1919 provided encouraging evidence of the rapid recovery of the game: there was plenty of attractive batting, and though the bowling was obviously below the pre-War standard, Douglas was very good in the first innings, whilst Parkin's form confirmed the rumour that our best professional bowler was for the moment to be found in the League. Oxford supplied the two "googly" bowlers, Stevens and Bettington, to the Gentlemen's XI the following summer, and, with Douglas, Loudon, Jupp, and Fender, in this department the attack was well catered for. The batting, however, was probably weaker than it had been since the first appearance of W. G., and the Players won with great ease. Again in 1921 the Gentlemen were sadly outclassed. Their batting order was an unlikely mixture of unsoundness and youthful promise, and, although Fender enlivened the proceedings with a dashing century which took the game over into the third day, the result had been obvious since luncheon on the first.

If the summer of 1921 represented the nadir of English cricket, the following season surely marked the beginnings of recovery. The return of Hobbs to the field was in itself an encouragement, but more significant was the fine cricket seen in the Gentlemen and Players' match. The batting of Hobbs, Russell, and Woolley on the one side, the splendid hitting of Chapman and Carr on the other, and, above all, the superb fielding of the amateurs, suggested that our cricket was definitely on the upward grade again. In this match Chapman, who had just previously made a century against Oxford, followed it up with a brilliant 160, thus recalling R. E. Foster's feat twenty years earlier.

The Gentlemen again emerged with credit from the match in 1923, ensuring at worst a draw by declaring their first innings at 451 for 9. Stevens and M. D. Lyon made centuries apiece, and both played admirably, though Stevens certainly enjoyed a good deal of luck. Rain after luncheon on the second day, after Hobbs

and Sutcliffe had been sent back for nothing, prevented much prospect of a result, but at least the Gentlemen had the satisfaction of requiring their opponents to follow-on.

For this indignity they were made to suffer the following year, the margin against them being no less than an innings and 231! Hobbs and Hearne, in a long and patient stand, took all the kick out of the bowling, and the Players eventually piled up 514. Two really miserable collapses followed of which it could only be said in extenuation that the second followed heavy rain, which gave Kilner a "sticky dog" to bowl on.

A victory at the Oval was, in 1925, no meaningless success, and the manner of the Gentlemen's triumph in that year makes pleasant reading. Set to make 198 in an hour and three-quarters, they won by four wickets in the last over, against an attack composed of Tate, Howell, Kennedy, Hearne, Edwards, and Bowley. Edwards, slow left-arm, was then taking scores of wickets very cheaply for Bucks, and is yet to be seen wheeling away steadily in the Parks in the first fortnight of the season before he returns to his successful efforts at Uppingham. This match produced a record aggregate of 1,313 runs. In the first innings Allen gave some of the first evidence of his class, as distinct from his utility, as a batsman by scoring 130 at number eight, and taking part in a prolific stand with Haig, who missed his century by two. In the final effort it was two Etonians, Haig and Aird, who knocked off the last 87 runs in half an hour.

At Lord's the Gentlemen found Hobbs at his best in an innings of 140, while Holmes, always a big run-getter at headquarters, made 92. Stevens, of the short back-lift and the sound defence, led the amateurs' scoring with 75 and 129, and when it seemed as though they might yet be beaten Allen popped up again, with a half-century which enabled his side to declare and draw with honour. At Scarborough in the same year the relentless Hobbs took out his bat for 266, but it was Haig once more who spiked the professionals' guns. The Middlesex amateur contingent thus showed up very notably. Actually in 1925 an amateur side could be drawn from the county (including, say, Mann, Stevens, Bruce, Livock, Enthoven, Guise, Dales, Allen, Haig, Tanner, and Kidd) which would probably have accounted for any opposition in the lower half of the Championship.

The Gentlemen and Players of 1926 was a remarkable match on several counts. It saw a stand of 263 for the first wicket between Hobbs and Sutcliffe (the Champion and A. J. Webbe had put on 203 fifty years before); a record total by the Players of 579; a hat-trick by Enthoven to finish it off; and a reply amounting to 542. Five past or future England captains contributed to the Gentlemen's score. It was the first appearance of both Wyatt and Jardine,

who made 75 and 85 respectively, but the most glamorous effort was Chapman's 108. In 1926 Chapman was that most dangerous of antagonists: a left-handed hitter who pursued sound principles. In those days his right foot was still faithfully following the line of the ball.

The cricket world was intrigued in July 1927 by the announcement that a young nineteen-year-old Scot named Peebles would appear for the Gentlemen at the Oval. He was not yet qualified for Middlesex, but P. F. Warner and Aubrey Faulkner were said to hold the highest opinions of him, and tales had filtered through of a mysterious youth who was said to be practically unplayable on the wickets of Faulkner's admirable cricket school. Without achieving anything dramatic Peebles no doubt satisfied his sponsors well enough by forcing the respect of Hobbs himself on a true Oval wicket, and claiming Sandham as his first victim. Peebles was to bowl successfully in many Test matches within the next ten years, but Faulkner, one of the greatest judges of a cricketer that ever lived, used often to maintain that if only he could have produced in the open the form he showed indoors, before he had been heard of, England would have had another Sydney Barnes with which to confront the genius of Bradman.

The Lord's match this year was rained out, but not before an excellent and significant century had flowed from the bat of Jardine. In the corresponding match next year Jardine played two further innings of high class which silenced any doubts as to his fitness to accompany M.C.C. to Australia. Wyatt, his rival for the claim of the soundest of post-War amateur batsmen, played extremely well, notwithstanding which the Players won by 9 wickets. The Oval match by now had sadly lost caste, but 1928 saw a stirring meeting between amateurs and professionals at the Folkestone Festival wherein the Players got 256 in their last innings in two hours and a half and won with fifteen minutes to spare. Woolley is one of the few truly great English cricketers who has never made a century in Gentlemen and Players at Lord's. The Folkestone ground, though, was always one of his happiest hunting-grounds, and in this assault by the Players his 141 not out was a terrific piece of hitting.

Gentlemen and Players in 1929 was a splendid match and one which suggested very fairly the relative standard of the two. Freeman at his very best took 8 for 41 in the Gentlemen's first innings of 138, and the Players had to fight very hard for runs until Hendren and Tate assured them of a lead of just over a hundred. Carr, Wyatt, and Killick led a second innings of 310 which set the Players to score 196, and a majestic assault by Hammond and Woolley led to victory by 7 wickets. Three undergraduates played for the Gentlemen; Killick, Crawley, and Benson; Killick batted

like a model in both innings, and Crawley showed his outstanding natural ability in one, while Benson's wicket-keeping was up to the best amateur standard. Wyatt, Carr, Lyon, Fender, Allen, Haig, Robins, and White made up a side which could well be described in the hackneyed phrase, "a judicious blend of youth and experience."

1930 was one of the Gentlemen's stronger years, and a fourth day might have seen them victorious for the first time at Lord's since before the War. The triumph that was acclaimed was, however, a personal one, K. S. Duleepsinhji following "Tip" Foster (1900) and King of Leicester (1904) in making a hundred in each innings. Rain caused certain delays, and though the Gentlemen went in again with a lead of 30 the last day never promised a legitimate finish, and Chapman preferred to give a great batsman the chance of a remarkable distinction rather than encourage a fictitious one. With Allen, Allom, Peebles, Robins, and White, the Gentlemen had quite as efficient an attack as the Players could show in the persons of Larwood, Tate, Freeman, Geary, and Leyland. It was the latter, incidentally, who with his left-arm "chinamen" shared with Peebles the bowling honours of the match. Allom about this time could be, perhaps, the most dangerous new-ball bowler in England, with a very late out-swing and real pace off the ground; but he was always being troubled with the minor strains which beset almost all fastish amateur bowlers who cannot play first-class cricket regularly.

In the following year a threat was made to the traditional character of the Gentlemen and Players match at Lord's which aroused no little adverse comment at the time, and which, thankfully, has not since been repeated. The historic contest was virtually converted into a trial match, with many whose form was unquestioned excluded. Thus professional batsmanship was represented by a side without Hobbs, Woolley, and Hendren, while Larwood and Voce were ignored, though both were in great form for Notts. Inevitably, with Lord's staging a Test Match every summer, the prestige attending Gentlemen and Players has been somewhat decreased, but to have represented one or the other at Lord's is, and should always be, accepted as a high mark of quality.

There was no play on the first day, but the second contained the unique sight of Sutcliffe being paralysed by Brown. The Players were bowled out on a false wicket for 88, and when rain again interrupted the play, this time for good, they needed 177 to win, with all wickets standing, against Brown, Robins, and Marriott.

Some high-class batting marked the match in 1932. Hammond claimed the honours of the first day with a magnificent hundred in less than two hours, and the Gentlemen replied to the Players' 301 with a declaration at 430 for 8. What might appear a hearty

vindication of English amateur batsmanship was, however, a dual triumph for the two English-taught Indians, Duleepsinhji and Pataudi. Duleepsinhji, as usual, was the more graceful and more dashing of the two; but Pataudi's patience against very accurate bowling was admirable, and he saw the ball so early that he could make all his defensive strokes with the utmost composure. Moreover, when he had reached his hundred, he launched out into a furious attack, lashing, but not slogging, his way to 165 in a further 35 minutes. The new masters had had their say, and now it was the turn of the old. Hobbs, very properly returning to the match, dismissed any idea of a collapse with an impeccable not out century which put him one ahead of W. G.'s string of sixteen for the Gentlemen.

The weather won for the Players in 1933, rain coming in the night after the Players had made 309. The Gentlemen only just escaped the innings defeat, but Jardine and Turnbull distinguished themselves. In his first hour's batting, on a most difficult wicket, Jardine made 6; when Farnes arrived at number ten he changed his game, and in three-quarters of an hour added 53 by superb stroke-play in all directions against two fast bowlers, Clark and Nichols, two slow left-arm bowlers (Verity and Langridge), and one off-spinner (Townsend). The writer recalls this innings, along with a century before luncheon by Hammond at Horsham in 1937, as classics of forcing batsmanship on a sticky wicket.

1934 was a notable summer in English cricket, for it contained the Gentlemen's first victory at Lord's for twenty years. The way of it was, briefly, thus: Wyatt put in the Players, who made 263, to which the Gentlemen replied with 277. The Players then made 245 for 5, including a solid century on his first appearance in the match by Mitchell of Yorkshire. Hendren declared, calling upon the enemy to score 232 at an average speed of just over eighty an hour, and giving his bowlers ten minutes short of three hours in which to get them out. It was a provocative gesture that would be answered only in one way in a club match, and it was good to see the Gentlemen making no bones about their acceptance of the challenge. Wyatt and Walters at once began to bat as, in similar circumstances, Fry and Maclaren might have done. Walters at first was a little the faster scorer, reaching fifty out of 94 in three-quarters of an hour. Then Wyatt, with a stream of off-drives, all of which might have decorated a text-book, began to chase him. In eighty minutes they scored 160, before Walters fell to a fast break-back from Nichols. Wyatt carried on, and when, with the winning stroke, he took his score to 104, there were still twenty-five minutes to go. It was a glorious achievement, and not the least credit went to the Players, particularly to Hendren, who, in theory, had judged his proposition to a nicety.

Actually the Gentlemen won twice in 1934, an almost representative team of Players being beaten at Folkestone by three wickets. The Old Wykehamist, Read, bundled out nine of them and reminded the critics, not for the first time, how many of the foremost batsmen are uncomfortable against real pace. Read had no tricks, and no great control, but at about this time he was, through the air, probably the fastest bowler in the country.

The 1935 match at Lord's was a singularly quiet anti-climax after the Test against South Africa at Leeds. The Gentlemen, with Jardine not playing at all and Walters definitely out of cricket, had a highly fallible batting side, with a straggling tail, and were beaten on the third morning by nine wickets. The Oval match was cancelled shortly before it was due to take place, the Surrey club finding it impossible to collect teams of the requisite strength. It would seem now to be dead beyond recall.

Many will remember the Gentlemen and Players of 1936 until their dying day. They may have been present on the second afternoon and watched the inspired spell by that most zealous of all modern cricketers, Captain Stephenson, who in sixteen overs took 9 of the Players' wickets for 46; or they may have looked in at Lord's, more in hope than expectation, on the last evening and watched Farnes and Allen sending the stumps flying into space. That second innings of the Players was, if it could have been seen as such, a prophetic episode in view of the Australian tour. Perhaps, if Stephenson had found his way into G. O. Allen's team, as maybe he should have done, the augury would now seem to have even more point.

At this time it was the custom at Lord's to pitch the stumps at varying distances from the pavilion railings according to the state of wear of each particular strip of that hard-worked square; so that where a popping-crease was one year might be the good-length spot when the same wicket was used next. And where the heavy roller had stopped on the former occasion a ridge tended to form, which helped the bowler who could hit what then became the length spot. The practice has since been changed, so that the stumps for every match are pitched on two parallel lines; but undoubtedly it was this unexpected effect of the roller that caused one of the Indian cricketers, with his keen Eastern eye, to exclaim, on seeing the Lord's square for the first time, "But it is not flat!" These ridges worked in the bowlers' interest whether the ball pitched on the up or the down gradient. In the former case it was naturally inclined to rise, in the latter to squat. And undoubtedly Stephenson found a slight ridge on the day of his triumph. The fact hardly detracts from his performance, for it is one thing to be favoured by a circumstance such as this, and another to devastate the flower of professional batting from number one to eleven with

hardly a spark of resistance. Stephenson bowls with the run-up and delivery of a medium-pace bowler, but, like Tate in his prime, he is so strong in the back and shoulders, and there is such zest and rhythm in his action that he is appreciably quicker than the average stock bowler. Again, like Tate, he is a "cutter," using the seam to make the ball move either way off the ground as well as in the air. In the field his acrobatics only seemed extraordinary when he first came to light, and before it was realized that such efforts were the spontaneous manifestations of one with a unique passion for the game. He is a superb fielder to his own bowling and in any close position.

The Gentlemen's 130 in this match would have looked utterly miserable but for Holmes and Brown of Surrey, who made 85 between them and were the only two men to reach double figures. Hammond and Hardstaff monopolized to an equal degree the Players' 194. A worthy and determined 85 by Pearce, the Essex captain, enabled Allen to set the Players to score 132 in an hour and a quarter, and then came the remarkable fast bowling of Farnes, supported by Allen and Stephenson, which sent back Gimblett, Barnett, Hammond, Leyland, and Hardstaff for 33 runs. Farnes's bowling for nearly an hour was said to be the fastest seen in the match since the days of Kortright.

Farnes was again the Gentlemen's most successful bowler in 1937, when the Players won at half past six on the second day by eight wickets. For the first time since 1925 the Gentlemen included four University cricketers. Moreover, the Oxonians, Kimpton and Mitchell-Innes, provided the only half-centuries scored by their side, while Macindoe, a freshman from Eton, justified his choice as opening bowler. Yardley, the fourth, redeemed himself later by averaging 44 for Yorkshire and by his consistent batting for Lord Tennyson's team in India in the winter.

The constitution of the Gentlemen's team on this occasion sheds an interesting light on the origins and circumstances of the foremost amateurs. Four have been mentioned as undergraduates; of the rest, Owen-Smith, the great all-round athlete of his day, was enjoying a couple of months' leave after his medical Finals before returning to South Africa; Brown was a "black-coated worker," only spasmodically available for big cricket; Farnes was a schoolmaster at Worksop, normally only available in August; Maxwell kept wicket for Sir Julien Cahn's XI. Only Wyatt, Dempster, and Sellers, captains of Warwickshire, Leicestershire, and Yorkshire, were regular participants in county cricket. This analysis is a sign of the times, and perhaps it was another when, during the winter, the Players' captain, Hammond, announced his recruitment into the motor business, and the consequent forfeiture of his professional status.

## OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE.

Such misgivings had been felt regarding the revival of the game at the Universities that the match at Lord's in 1919 had only been arranged "provisionally." As a matter of fact, a good nucleus of old Blues returned to both Oxford and Cambridge, and the teams which met at Headquarters were pretty well up to pre-War standard. Miles Howell, the Oxford captain, enjoyed a great personal triumph with the bat, his innings of 170 dominating the game, a feature of which was the appearance of the brothers Naumann and Gilligan, each brotherhood divided between the two Universities. Oxford won by 45 runs—and in view of what was to come it was just as well for the look of the records that they did.

Both Universities had exceptionally strong elevens in 1920, and came up to Lord's with fine records; but unfortunately the great match, so eagerly anticipated all over England, was utterly ruined by the weather. The Cambridge batting was very good, with H. Ashton and Chapman clearly above the ordinarily high University standard. They had five good bowlers, ranging in pace from Gilligan to C. S. Marriott, the latter of whom achieved the rare record of taking 50 wickets in a 'Varsity season. The Oxford batting was not quite so distinguished, but Stevens in both departments had confirmed the estimate under which in the previous summer he had been picked for the Gentlemen at Lord's whilst still a schoolboy, and Bettington's googlies had more than once caused a sensation. To crown all this, both sides had fielded brilliantly all the year. It was a tragedy that their meeting was spoilt.

The following year Cambridge had a really good eleven, and annihilated Oxford at Lord's. Marriott and Gibson were a good pair of bowlers, and with Bryan, Chapman, Fiddian-Green, and the three brothers Ashton, the batting was exceptionally strong. Of the latter, Hubert Ashton made a century in the 'Varsity match, and his success on all three occasions on which he met the Australians was so great that he was surely unlucky not to play in a Test Match. All three brothers were magnificent fielders. As batsmen Hubert was far the soundest, Gilbert and Claude the more attractive to watch.

Cambridge won even more shatteringly in 1922, and the fact that they had the better of the wicket can hardly have made the difference between victory and a draw. Chapman scored a brilliant hundred on his last appearance in the match, and Hubert Ashton declared ten short of another century, after a solid but somewhat dreary opening had put Cambridge behind the clock. The fact that Cambridge declared at 403 for 4 without needing to call upon C. T. Ashton, M. D. Lyon, and Allen is sufficient indication of their batting strength.



Oxford's revenge came twelve months later, and the enormous proportions of their success (by an innings and 223 runs) had to make up not only for past indignities, but a span of eight years before Cambridge again were beaten. This time rain on the first night put Cambridge right out of the match after Oxford had spent all day at the wickets. C. H. Taylor, a freshman whose elegance of method proclaimed the influence of D. J. Knight's coaching on the Westminsters, made 109 for Oxford, going in first, and Hewetson and Robertson-Glasgow made the evening merry in a partnership that was audacious but by no means wholly agricultural. Then Stevens and Bettington, undoubtedly the best pair of googly experts in the country at this time, shot out Cambridge for 59 and 136 on the Tuesday. Oxford cricket since the War has not always, perhaps, been lucky in its leadership, but in this year of Bettington's the team was controlled by a genial, if forceful, personality who got the best out of everyone.

A Dominion cricketer once again led the victorious XI at Lord's in 1924, but now he was a Cantab, T. C. Lowry. Enthoven contributed a century and the captain 68 to the 361 with which Cambridge answered Oxford's feeble first innings of 133. Only Guise, the hero of a great though unavailing 278 for Winchester against Eton three years earlier, and Barnard batted with any particular distinction for Oxford in either innings.

Oxford put up a much better fight the following year, forcing an honourable draw against what on paper was a considerably stronger side. Two Malvernians, Legge and Holmes, lent style to their batting, while Stewart-Brown, a forceful opener, had an excellent match at Lord's. Harrow batting, indeed, could not have had a better advertisement, for Enthoven made the second of his centuries for Cambridge, while L. G. Crawley failed by two to repeat the hundred he had made against Eton as a schoolboy, going in to luncheon at 98 and giving a catch to the wicket-keeper from the first ball afterwards.

1926 was the first of seven years in which Cambridge won the toss. The match was played in threatening weather, and in varying degrees of gloom, but produced some good cricket, the high spot of which was the hat-trick with which Lowe polished off the Oxford first innings. Enthoven in his last year again had a big say in a Cambridge victory, with 6 wickets and an aggregate of 74 in a low-scoring contest. He showed his judgment of a cricketer by choosing two freshmen, whose names are writ large in the annals of the game, R. W. V. Robins and M. J. Turnbull, although they had the most meagre figures to recommend them. A third freshman, L. G. Irvine, from Taunton School, took 52 wickets with leg-breaks and googlies, and for just about two months was one of the most dangerous bowlers in England. Unfortunately,

the magic quickly left him. The best performance for Oxford was the bowling of McCanlis, who began the match by having Seabrook, Dawson, and Duleepsinhji caught at second slip for 16 runs, and altogether took 5 for 59 with his out-swingers.

Cambridge won easily in 1927, despite the absence of Duleepsinhji, who, after breaking the Fenner's record with a tremendous innings of 254 not out (in four hours!) against Middlesex in May, developed pneumonia and could not play again during the summer. However, since seven undergraduates made hundreds for Cambridge in the season there was plenty of good batting left. A. K. Judd chose the most suitable occasion for his, and if his first fifty runs contained a certain amount of sketchy strokeplay the second fifty was a clean and adventurous piece of cricket. Holmes carried his side on his shoulders, and his two innings of 47 and 113 had to redeem some paltry batting. The Oxford XI contained half a dozen notable footballers and a brave horseman; its cricket limitations were considerable.

A splendid match in 1928 ended in a thrilling draw: Benson, the wicket-keeper, and C. K. Hill-Wood defying Cambridge for half an hour in an unbroken last wicket stand when their side was still more than a hundred behind. Hill-Wood kept his end up for an hour and forty minutes, but he should have been out at five minutes to seven had not the Cambridge short-leg crept unwisely close to the bat. Cambridge were rather the stronger side, with a phalanx of stout batting and a varied attack; Robins having during the course of the term turned himself from an unimpressive purveyor of quickish stuff into a dangerous slow leg-spinner. He completed his University career with a hundred at Lord's which gave him an average of 77 in three years against Oxford. A new star had arisen, too, at Cambridge in the person of Killick, whose eminent soundness of style was, within twelve months, to carry him into a Test Match. When the lack of top-class amateurs in English cricket is deplored, the number of promising players whose regular cricket ends when they come down from the Universities is apt to be forgotten. In Killick's case the call of the Church has deprived England of a batsman well capable of hoisting a hundred against Australia at Sydney or Melbourne. Killick was a Pauline, and his school had a notable match, for Oxford's batting honours were taken by Garland-Wells, a punishing player with a fine nerve for the occasion.

The 1929 match was an almost predestined draw, both sides being strong in batting and more than slender as regards bowling. The Nawab of Pataudi (106 and 84), J. T. Morgan (149), A. M. Crawley, Block, Kemp-Welch, and Valentine were the chief run-getters, Morgan's innings being remarkable in that he had hardly made a run during the season, and Crawley's in that it was the only

time this gifted but mercurial player came off against Cambridge in four years.

We have now arrived at one of the historic University Matches—the memory of which causes many a sensitive Oxonian to wince with pain. On paper Oxford in 1930 were much the stronger side, with a better selection of batsmen than at any time since Bettington's year, and perhaps the outstanding English bowler of the season. When, at noon on the third day, Cambridge, with six men out a second time, were only 110 runs on, no one could have given a fig for their chances. Four hours later they had set Oxford more than three hundred to make. Two hours after that Oxford, having embarked on a wild and undisciplined attempt to score at 120 an hour, and later reverted to a palsied, fast-footed defence, had been beaten by 205 runs. The high-class cricket of the match centred on the duel between Killick and Peebles. Killick, who made 75 and 136, showed the mentality as well as the technique of a true cricketer in keeping Peebles' bowling to himself, even, be it added, to the extent of refusing more than one long single that would have completed his century but taken him to the wrong end. Peebles' record of thirteen wickets for 237 runs in 81 overs is astonishing when it is considered that the number of chances missed off his bowling went well into double figures.

After such a débâcle 1931 was bound to be a critical year in the fortunes of Oxford cricket. The choice of captain fell on D. N. Moore, a Salopian in his second year, and no praise can be too high for the spirit and the efficiency which he quickly inspired in his side. It was a tragedy that Moore, who was taken critically ill before the Match, should not have been present to see the fruits of his work. For Oxford did achieve a highly laudable performance. They lost the toss once more, and Cambridge made full use of one of the beautiful wickets which, whatever was the state of the rest of Lord's square at about this time, were always available for the chief matches of the season. Kemp-Welch and Ratcliffe, who only came into the team because of an accident to J. G. W. Davies, put on 149 for the first wicket, and Ratcliffe went on in his compact, orthodox way past his century, past Marsh's 172, and past the second century. When he was caught at slip for 201 he had batted for five hours forty minutes and had given only one chance, at 179. The old record made by Marsh had stood for twenty-seven years; Ratcliffe's lasted less than twenty-four hours. The Nawab of Pataudi had begun the Oxford tour by making 183 not out against the Army; he followed with 165 and 100 against Surrey; and his next effort was 138 and 68 against Leveson-Gower's XI. Thereupon he was rested; Melville, upon whom the captaincy had fallen, no doubt being frightened that he would waste another hundred or two against M.C.C. Before six o'clock of the second day of the

University Match he was back in the pavilion, undefeated for 238, and Melville had declared with a lead of 68. The turning-point of the Oxford innings occurred when Owen-Smith joined Pataudi at 185 for 4. Under Owen-Smith's example Pataudi joined in a vigorous offensive on the Cambridge bowlers, particularly Hazle-rigg, whose flighted off-breaks with the pavilion at his back had been made to seem so deadly a year before. Cambridge wilted under the fury of Owen-Smith's off-driving, and when he left Pataudi's mastery, hitherto threatened at times by Brown's leg-breaks, was unchallenged. Pataudi's was a truly great innings, as near to technical perfection as could be, and of supreme watchfulness. Cambridge did not lose a wicket overnight, but Oxford's gesture was worth more than the possible runs that might have been added. Moreover, the pitch was dusting up a little, and next day Wellings and Owen-Smith used it admirably after Scott had set Oxford supporters in a roar by spredeagling Ratcliffe's stumps. Oxford in the end were set to make 55, and Hone's steadiness ensured that in Farnes or Brown Cambridge should not produce another "Bob" Fowler. This was the best achievement credited to either side since the War.

The University Match of 1932 was drawn, after Cambridge had made their highest score in the series, 431, and Oxford, in spite of poor light and a drizzle which invited Farnes to make the ball kick to perilous heights, replied, over many short spells of play, with 368. There were three centuries. Wilcox contributed a worthy 157 for Cambridge, and Ratcliffe followed Yardley, Enthoven, and Pataudi with a second century in the match, but it was a curiously slow and untimely effort compared with his first. The class performance was Hone's, who played a rock-like innings of 167 in varying and never wholly favourable conditions.

Oxford's luck with the toss can hardly be said to have changed in 1933, for they won it in circumstances in which a captain would consider it well lost. At the end of the second day Oxford had dashed in and out of the rain to score 164—not without a deal of physical danger attached, for Farnes, in slightly restricted form, practised the theory which had shaken the cricket world the previous winter. On the Wednesday Cambridge replied with 209 on a pitch which would certainly have responded generously to anyone who could have combined length and spin. Then Farnes's pace and lift wrought such destruction that six Oxonians were out for 32, and with a hundred minutes to go Cambridge still led by 13. The situation was courageously saved by Jenkins, better known to games players as a great Rugby full back, and Chalk, who refused to be moved until 6.30.

An equitable draw in 1934 might have been a victory for either side if Oxford had been prepared to take the risk of losing on a

declaration. The first innings of both sides had realized four hundred and taken the fashionable course, Townsend (193) and Chalk (108) of Oxford and Allen (115) and Parker (94) of Cambridge joining in stands of more than two hundred, and all batting pleasantly enough against unhostile bowling. On the last day, following rain overnight, there was definitely something to be got out of the wicket, and Oxford were always struggling. They ultimately made 182, and Cambridge soon abandoned the effort to score 198 in 110 minutes. If Oxford had felt justified in setting their opponents, say, 180 in a little over two hours, which would have put them under the moral obligation of fighting it out, there would certainly have been an admirable finish, and the very reasonable possibility is that Barlow and Singleton would have spun Cambridge out. It is a disturbing state of affairs when the Universities, as well as Eton, prefer safety first to taking a fair chance.

There have been few bigger surprises in modern cricket than the overthrow of Oxford in 1935. They approached the Match as strong favourites, more perhaps because an undistinguished-looking Cambridge side seemed to have so little to commend it than by reason of any outstanding match-winning virtues of their own. Yet Oxford had lost by 195 runs before tea on the third afternoon, and the identical side that had been responsible for an innings of 429 against South Africa in the Parks could only muster a hundred less in both innings against Cambridge. This perhaps is a pertinent moment to remark that, as Agar's Plough provides much more suitable practice for Lord's than the Harrow Sixth Form Ground, so the character of the Fenner's wicket gives Cambridge a practical advantage over Oxford. The unsound batsman can "get away with it" in the Parks, where he never could hope to, on a wicket less easy in pace, while it is death to the slow spin bowler who might be invaluable at Lord's. In their first innings Oxford were fiddled out by the high-flung leg-breaks of Cameron—to which all but Singleton, Benn, and de Saram (85) played back! In their second they lost 7 wickets for 45 before Kimpton, the Australian who with de Saram is probably the best batsman produced by either University since the days of Pataudi and Killick, showed a combination of resolution and footwork. But whatever the sins of Oxford, the personal influence of Parker on the Cambridge side as regards morale must not go unrecognized.

Another defeat awaited Oxford in 1936, but this time, with Kimpton out of the side through injury, they fell to a combination which was definitely their technical superior. Cambridge batted all the first day for 432 for 9, to which Nelson and Yardley each contributed nineties, while the middle and tail went on steadily collecting runs against a fairly accurate but amiable attack on a dead easy wicket until the previous record was passed. Mitchell-Innes,

Walford, and Singleton provided a certain class in the Oxford batting, but Brocklebank's leg-breaks were too good for most, and after tea Oxford were following on. Mitchell-Innes had scored 79 out of Oxford's 121 for 1 at the close, having carried Oxford on his shoulders for the greater part of the day. But next morning his excellent innings ended quickly, and gradually it became a question whether Oxford would save the innings defeat. This they just managed, but 6 for 92 made Brocklebank's record 10 for 139. His leg-break came along much too quickly to be met on the full-pitch, and with the hill to help it it turned sometimes the width of the bat. His was the best bowling performance in the match since the unavailing effort of Peebles.

The 1937 match was contested between one side of very limited talent and another containing much individual ability, which was rarely collectively impressive, and actually came desperately close to having to scramble for victory. The general standard of cricket at Cambridge in 1937 was alarmingly low, and nothing that the officers of the C.U.C.C. could have done would have produced bricks without straw. Tindall in fact deserved the thanks of all for maintaining to the full that cheerful morale which has so often stood Cambridge sides in good stead—in spite of a discouraging personal season, for which his Finals were no doubt to blame.

Macindoe (who achieved the very rare distinction of being chosen for the Gentlemen as a freshman) and Darwall-Smith struck a mortal blow for Oxford by taking the first three wickets in half an hour, and a fourth fell before Yardley and Cameron staged a recovery. Yardley's polished and attractive hundred was responsible for Cambridge eventually struggling to 253. Then it was Oxford's turn to flounder, and four of the best batsmen were out for 56 before Dixon and Grover, by the dourest methods, played out the first day. Grover struck the ball admirably next morning, while Dixon continued to infuriate or gratify, according to taste. Grover made more than a hundred, mainly by clean and powerful driving, before luncheon. Oxford got their lead after all, and only Gibb ever looked like establishing a mastery over some steady bowling when Cambridge batted again. Gibb showed the true Yorkshire spirit in a splendid innings, which was of far greater worth than many recent University Match hundreds. He was sadly run out through no fault of his own for 87, and Oxford were set 157 to make.

They lost three for 74, and Oxonians in the pavilion had a shocking moment when Hunt made a beauty go up the hill and miss Kimpton's bat and stumps by an equally minute margin. There might have been a crisis—with chances at that moment perhaps on Cambridge. As it was, Barton continued to play with the utmost soundness, and a brilliant episode by Kimpton hastened the end.

It is gratifying to record that in the last year or two the University Match, though no longer the social function that it was before the War, has shown signs of regaining its hold on the cricket public, and the long-delayed experiment of a Saturday start may this year provide an additional tonic. It is, of course, regrettably true that fewer and fewer University players can now afford the time for regular participation in first-class cricket when once they have "gone down"; but Oxford and Cambridge are still the chief forcing-beds for amateur talent, and it seems a pity that the conditions for its development there are not more favourable.

In contrast with the crews and the members of the athletic teams, University cricketers have not in term time the benefit of any first-class coaching; nor is there, either in arrangements for supervised practice or in the general condition of college cricket, the systematic organization necessary to ensure the best being made of the talent available, or even, on occasion, the best selection being ultimately reached.

No one can doubt the enthusiasm of the captains and secretaries yearly responsible, but they are handicapped by the system they inherit, the shortness of time at their disposal, and the inherent conservatism of University life. The conditions under which net practice is carried out in the Parks at Oxford would not be regarded as satisfactory at any self-respecting public school.

A final point: in batting and bowling University elevens cannot in the nature of things reach the highest level of technique; but in fielding they can fairly be expected to lead the way. A 'Varsity captain is entitled to demand the maximum effort in fielding from every member of his side and is wise if he insists on systematic fielding practice whenever opportunity offers. For on no cricket investment is the yield more paying or more certain. Moreover, it is illogical to expect the best in the University Match if untidy, let alone casual, fielding has been tolerated in the trial games. In this respect some Oxford elevens since the War cannot escape criticism.

### THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

The virtues and vices of Test Match and County cricket naturally tend to be reflected by younger players; and this has proved particularly true in the school cricket witnessed since the War, most unfortunately perhaps in the slavish imitation of a faulty batting technique and in a reluctance to take risks, whether in batting or in declarations. Fortunately, there are signs that the pendulum is swinging, and the last four or five years have, both in the great schools match at Lords and elsewhere, given good grounds for hope that a truer standard of values is beginning to prevail.

It is rather curious that the first year after the War, when presumably coaching had been somewhat at a premium, should have produced in Jardine, Chapman, and Stevens, three boys destined to play so distinguished a part in bigger cricket, and when we add to these Gibson, Hedges, Robertson-Glasgow, and N. E. Partridge, we are bound to admit that no subsequent year can really rival this product in distinction. Stevens, who hailed from University College School, had the extraordinary distinction of representing the Gentlemen at Lord's while still at school, after celebrating a Whitsuntide holiday by taking 7 wickets for 104 on his first appearance for Middlesex. He was the first post-War figure in a notable series of young cricketers produced by schools who hitherto had not perhaps enjoyed any great cricket prestige. After him came Robins, of Highgate, who in 1925 averaged 60 with the bat for a total of 800 and took 60 wickets for 15 apiece—figures that have not been challenged since the days of J. N. Crawford; in 1925, too, Killick had extraordinary figures for St. Paul's, whilst Turnbull made 1,323 runs for Downside. Four years later Wilcox exceeded the thousand for Dulwich, and F. R. Brown, then bowling fast-medium, was a great figure at Leys. Dulwich, too, produced Bartlett, a brilliant hitter, who twice made 200 for the school in 1933, and from St. Paul's came Judge, who played with success for Middlesex in the August after leaving school. But these outstanding players only illustrated what was in fact a general tendency, namely, for amateur cricket both in the 'Varsities and counties to be recruited from an ever-widening area; for instance, of amateurs who have played for England at home against Australia or South Africa since the War only seven learnt their cricket at any of the "historic" cricket schools, whilst fourteen came from schools that before the War had enjoyed little cricket distinction. The same shifting balance comes out clearly in the list of Blues since the War.

Eton re-entered the lists with three decisive victories over Harrow, and in Gibson and Allen produced two of the best amateur bowlers that have appeared since the War. In 1923 Dawson made history with centuries against both Harrow and Winchester, and in 1924 and 1925 Cobbold had a fine all-round record both through the season and in the great match at Lord's. In 1927 they had an unusually good pair of left-hand bowlers, Whittaker and Ward, the former of whom played for Sussex in August; and in the next year Akers-Douglas played a very brilliant innings of 158 to win the match against Harrow after a series of six drawn games. In 1930, thanks largely to the admirable bowling of Pelham, they beat both Harrow and Winchester for the first time since 1921, and next year rather confounded their critics by trouncing Harrow by an innings and 16 runs. In this match A. W. Allen, a batsman



of beautiful method, played a classic innings of 112 in a record first wicket partnership of 208, but it was his partner Hotchkin (153) who went on to beat all previous figures in the match by scoring 109 and 96 in 1932, and 88 and 12 in 1933. Rather modern in method and perhaps not very attractive to watch, Hotchkin was, nevertheless, a great school batsman with a wonderful technique on the on-side and a fine judge and runner of his runs.

Inasmuch as Harrow have not won at Lord's since 1908, it has long been fashionable among the ignorant to ask what is wrong with their cricket: the real answer is "nothing." True they have at times sadly gainsayed at Lord's their form in the rest of the season, and there are even years when the very anxiety and keenness of themselves and their supporters have prevented them from showing their true form, but they have in fact produced many fine cricketers, and their record of fourteen Blues since the War is only surpassed by that of Winchester. Five of these Blues were at Harrow in 1921, and yet they were beaten by 7 wickets. In L. G. and A. M. Crawley, the school can point to two of the finest stylists seen since the War, whilst Tindall and Pawle were little inferior in method: Enthoven, a splendid all-rounder, passed on to Cambridge, later to win the unique distinction of scoring two hundreds against Oxford and doing the hat-trick for the Gentlemen. Moreover, to Harrow belongs the credit of having in recent years gone all out for victory in the great match at Lord's, and the names of Pawle, Studd, and Watson, though captains in defeat, will long be remembered alike for their cricket and their courage in striving after victory.

Winchester since the War have turned out as many successful cricketers as any school, and only Wykehamists know how much for this they have to thank the wisdom and unwearying effort of their great coach, Rockley Wilson. In both 1919 and 1920 Winchester beat Eton, and in Jardine and C. T. Ashton they had, of course, two outstanding players. 1921 will always be known as Guise's year, and his extraordinary performance of scoring 278 out of 343 from the bat may well stand as a record for all time in this game: "modern" and never particularly attractive to watch, he was, nevertheless, a great school batsman with first-class judgment and defence, and a great mastery of on-side strokes. In 1926 and 1927 Kingsley and Fleming made an immense number of runs for Winchester, and I believe they are the only pair of batsmen from the same school ever to play twice in the representative side against the Army at Lord's. Though not pre-eminent in combination, it was very rare for both of them to fail. Fleming's 210 on Agar's Plough in 1927 is second only to Guise's score, but Kingsley, who played five years for the school, was the more gifted and attractive player. In the latter of these two years Winchester

were an unbeaten team, and he who knows best reckons them better than even their famous side of 1904. Next year again they were perhaps the best school side of the year with a notable pair of bowlers in Brett and P. Townsend: only rain robbed them of victory over Eton. Four years later they showed some of the best batting in the history of this match by scoring over 400 most attractive runs before tea time on the first day: at 6.45 on the Saturday victory seemed certain, but an heroic last wicket stand by Eton just cheated them of the success they had earned. Barton, a sound player full of strokes to the on, scored 100 in this match, and next year repeated the feat, which constitutes a Wykehamical record. Among other notable players of the period that the school has produced we may mention T. B. Raikes, a fine bowler who took 8 for 14 against Charterhouse in 1921, D. C. H. Townsend and R. de W. K. Winlaw, who subsequently did very well for their Universities, and a scion of the Foster family who made a beautiful hundred against Eton in 1935.

The balance between Rugby and Marlborough has remained fairly even since the War, though neither School appears in any year to have been outstandingly strong. Rugby had a good XI in 1924, with E. F. Longrigg and H. C. Pattison the mainstay of the batting, and Dawson and D. S. Milford, the present world's rackets champion, two effective bowlers, whilst Marlborough were at their best in 1930 and 1931 with Nelson, a fine bat, and Comber, an accomplished wicket-keeper. In 1935 G. E. Hewan made history for them in the great match with a wonderful double of 178 and 98. Tonbridge have had rather the better of the exchanges with Clifton in matches that have been singularly unfortunate in their weather. C. H. Knott in the early years foreshadowed the remarkable and original gifts which he later used in such splendid service for Kent, but perhaps the best Tonbridge side was that of 1928: the next year saw the success of J. G. W. Davies, a fine all-round player and a truly wonderful fielder. Easily the outstanding figure from Clifton since the War is that of E. K. Scott, who in the five years terminating in August 1937 took 244 wickets by his spin bowling, thereby eclipsing the figures of even the redoubtable C. L. Townsend. Cheltenham can proudly point to Duleepsinhji, whose natural gifts and beautiful method were fully apparent before he left school; and latterly to E. D. R. Eagar, who played as a schoolboy for Gloucestershire.

If Malvern have not recently reproduced quite the glories of their golden epoch they have yet turned out some good sides and splendid players, notably in Partridge, a great all-rounder in the year after the War, whilst their 1922 team included Holmes, Legge, and Jagger: the former was a really grand school cricketer, a batsman of the typical Malvern style with beautiful strokes on the

off-side, a splendid field, hard-working fast bowler with a sunny and gallant temperament. More recently they had another most prolific run-getter and beautiful stylist in E. H. Moss, whose failure to catch the eye of selection at Oxford must always remain one of the mysteries of post-War cricket. Repton, too, may have fallen back from their peak period of 1903-10, but in the two Humans and Valentine they have produced three of the most attractive amateur batsmen now playing, whose aggression and beautiful strokes have delighted many a county ground.

Among the Midland schools nothing has been more striking than the advance of Uppingham to a point almost reminiscent of their great days under H. H. Stephenson. In the four seasons, 1931-34, they only suffered defeat twice, an outstanding success for which they owe a great debt to the coaching of F. W. Gilligan. From teams that were full of good and very keen cricketers it is permissible to pick out Walker and Chalk, both destined to captain and make many runs for Oxford, and Ballance, a left-arm bowler with a beautiful action who, though he got his Blue, was never again perhaps quite so good as he was at school. Shortly after the War Shrewsbury unearthed a bowler of quite exceptional pace in E. P. Hewetson; but their outstanding cricketer of the period was D. N. Moore, who actually made 1,038 runs in 1929 with an average of 103. The flighted length bowling of Barlow and the spirited all-round cricket of Singleton were features of more recent years.

Haileybury, undistinguished for some years, had an outstanding XI in 1934, when four of its members had the distinction of being picked against the Army at Lord's, but undoubtedly the most gifted player they have produced since the War was R. E. H. Hudson, who scored nearly a thousand runs in 1922 and might, but for his Army duties, have attained representative honours. The same might almost be said of G. J. Bryan, who in 1920 averaged over 100 for Wellington and stepped comfortably into County cricket in August. Charterhouse and Westminster do not seem as a rule to have had the bowling necessary for great success, but in Barnard, Garnett, and Lomas (the latter making over 2,000 runs for his school, and Garnett over 1,000 in one season) the former had three accomplished batsmen, whilst Westminster in 1922 had a remarkable pair of cricketers in Lowe and Taylor.

Nothing is more striking in school cricket since the War than the continuous extension of sound and effective coaching into schools where a generation ago little of it was known. The task of the selectors for the representative sides at Lord's grows yearly more difficult, and selection for the Lord's schools or "The Rest," still more for the combined side against the Army, is a definite hallmark of real distinction. It is significant that in the nineteen matches played since the War the Lord's schools can only look

back to two victories as against nine defeats with none the best of the balance in the drawn games. To find another and natural line of demarcation may not be easy, but a better division of the field is clearly desirable. In 1926 a Schools XVI played the Australians at Lord's, but the experiment has not been repeated: the difference of class is too great to make a real cricket match possible, except at such odds as destroy the character of the game.



## CHAPTER XXXI

### THE LAST DECADE

AS the 1930's drew towards their close, the storm clouds banked ever more threateningly on the European horizon, and the close of play scores on the nine o'clock news became an increasingly inadequate anodyne to the tramp of the Nuremberg rallies. Yet over English cricket fields the sun still shone and the game seemed to have recovered much of its for-a-time ebbing enterprise and vitality and all of its public appeal.

Naturally, interest in 1938 centred on the visit of the Australians under Bradman. They went through the season with only two defeats, and by winning the Test Match at Lords retained the Ashes, but by no stretch of imagination could they be compared with the greatest of their predecessors. True they obliterated many of the counties, and until their captain's accident at the Oval fought bravely and effectively in the Tests, but they depended far too much on the prowess of two men, Bradman and O'Reilly. The former proved an admirable leader, vital, astute and popular with his own men and his opponents alike, and though we now know that he felt acutely the strain of the double burden, no sign of this appeared at the time and his batting was as dominating and masterly as ever.

Beginning with his inevitable 200 in the opening match at Worcester, he hardly knew what it was to fail, and his average of 115 at the end of the tour was another all-time record. He scored 13 hundreds, three of which were probably decisive to the result of the Test Matches in which they were played. Eschewing some of the brilliance of earlier tours, he showed as great a technique as ever and exploded for good the canard that he could not play on difficult wickets: his fielding remained an inspiration. O'Reilly carried an almost comparable burden; indeed there was appreciably less bowling to support his efforts than there was batting to support his captain's. McCormick was definitely fast, but never recovered from his shattering experience of bowling 35 no-balls in the opening match of the tour and took but 34 wickets in all. Fleetwood-Smith had days of triumph, but averaged 51 apiece for his 14 wickets in the Tests, ending with 1 for 298 at the Oval! Ward, Waite and White were no better than efficient and accurate end-holders—a far descent from Noble, Howell and Laver of long ago.

So day after day O'Reilly toiled on with his immaculate length, subtle variations of flight and spin, an unusual lift off the pitch, and invariable and uncompromising hostility, the lynch-pin of Australian out-cricket. Apart from Bradman, Brown was the soundest and most consistent batsman, whilst in Hassett, Badcock and Barnes, Australia brought over three young cricketers of great promise. Except for one innings of transcendent quality, McCabe was only a shadow of his past self.

The English side, under Hammond's captaincy, commanded most formidable batting strength, in which youth and experience, enterprise and defence were admirably blended. So too was it with the bowling, in the shape of Farnes, Bowes, Wright and Verity, but it just lacked the penetration and consistency to master some heart-breaking wickets—and Bradman.

At Nottingham, after Barnett and Hutton had made 169 before lunch and 219 for the first wicket, the latter and Compton went on to make hundreds in their first Test Match, thus rivalling the feat of Victor Trumper and Clem Hill at Lord's in 1899; but Paynter's 216 was the biggest factor in England's total of 658, in which there was only one bye. Australia countered with 411, of which McCabe made 232 in under three hours. It is unlikely that any more brilliant innings has ever been played in a Test Match; his driving and hooking were devastating, but Hammond's policy in delaying to take the new ball and in only giving Verity seven overs in the innings came in for criticism. Australia had nothing to play for but a draw, but memories of Noble and Collins in the past may well have nerved Brown and Bradman to their grim task: the former stayed five and a half hours for 133, whilst Bradman, going in late on Monday night, was still undefeated for 144 on Tuesday evening, a triumph of character as much as of technique.

At Lord's we started disastrously to some really fast bowling by McCormick, but Paynter and Hammond rescued the situation with a record Test partnership for the fourth wicket of 222. Paynter, who has always welcomed such crises, was unlucky to miss his century by a single run, but Hammond went on to score 240 in an innings which for power and security combined was generally acclaimed as the greatest of his extraordinary career. The pavilion, to a man, rose to him as he came in. For her strong counter of 411 to our initial 494, Australia owed everything to Brown, who carried his bat through the innings for 206 not out: his bat always looked broad, his foot-work was excellent, his vigilance unrelaxing. He had now, in two successive innings, defied England's bowlers for just about 12 hours! Rain, which towards the end of Australia's innings had held up play for three hours, now made the wicket false: McCormick once again proved menacing and half the English side were out for 76: once more Paynter held one end firm,

but it was Denis Compton who restored the balance with a not out 76 in which grace of stroke, confidence and perfection of timing belied all possibility of defeat. There was little prospect of a finish, but interest in the closing stage was sustained by a splendid not out 102 by Bradman.

Old Trafford overplayed its traditional hand by providing weather in which the captains did not even toss! But Leeds provided a fascinating match, a finish, and another illustration of how, to those who know, a battle in which the ball had always slightly the better of the bat can be more satisfying to watch than any orgy of run-getting. A wicket that always gave some help to the bowlers, occasional rain, at times bad light, and consistently hostile and accurate bowling had the batsman fighting all the time: only Hammond (76) and Bradman (102) mastered the conditions, but the dominant figure was really O'Reilly, whose ten wickets cost no more than 122 runs. Against England's first innings of 223, Australia, thanks largely to B. A. Barnett who played with great determination, got to 128 before their third wicket fell, but thereafter it was all Bradman. Combining defence and stroke play with masterly judgment, and "farming" the bowling most skilfully, he completely dominated the rest of the innings. When, facing a deficit of 19, England in the persons of C. J. Barnett and Edrich had put on 60 runs without being separated, hope ran high, but then, with the wicket showing obvious signs of wear, the Australian spin bowlers took charge and ten wickets fell for 73 more runs. Australia only needed 112, and were nearly half-way before their third wicket fell: then Wright, who might perhaps have been brought on earlier, took two quick wickets, including Bradman's, but with storm clouds threatening, Hassett took his life in his hands and brought his side to victory by five wickets. English supporters were left to wonder whether Hutton and Ames, could they have played, might not have made just that difference!

The Oval Match was at once a portent and a tragedy, a triumph and an anti-climax. Records fell like ripe plums: England's total of 903 for 7 wickets; Hutton's 364 in thirteen and a half hours of practically faultless batting; his second wicket partnership of 382 with Leyland (187) and sixth wicket stand of 215 with Hardstaff (169 not out), and our ultimate victory by an innings and 579 runs were all unprecedented: but from the moment when on the Tuesday afternoon Bradman twisted his ankle in bowling and was carried off the field, the match was virtually dead. He and he alone might on that pluperfect wicket have countered Hutton with an innings of comparable magnitude; but with him gone, there could, even in cricket, be only one end. Hammond felt it, and even though the match was "timeless," declared the innings at tea. The Australians clearly felt it, too, and for the most part batted like men without



hope, though Brown once again showed his fighting metal by batting right through the first innings to be last out for 69.

Of Hutton's historic innings one's abiding memories are—the unerring judgment of length which found him perfectly positioned for every stroke, his classically faultless defence both in back-play and with dead-bat forward stroke, beautiful cutting and off-driving, and the unfailing way in which he took toll from the ball on and outside his legs; but most of all perhaps the combined tranquillity and unrelaxing determination with which he went on his way, past milestone after milestone—his hundred, Phil Mead's record of 182 made on the same ground 17 years before, his two hundred, "Tip" Foster's 287 made in Sydney in 1903, his three hundred, and finally the perfect cut with which he passed Bradman's 334: of Bradman himself, who had gone to silly mid-off in a last effort to save his own laurels, hastening toward the new record-holder with outstretched hand. It was a proud day for England and for Yorkshiremen in particular—indeed the whole match was a triumph for the White Rose. They had five men in the eleven who together made 612 runs and took 10 wickets, whilst Wood, their stumper, playing in his first Test Match, held three catches, made 53, and only let 5 byes in the match. O'Reilly toiled heroically for two and a half days and never lost his accuracy, and for a short spell after a shower on Monday morning Fleetwood-Smith was dangerous, but the rest of the bowlers hardly got a ball past the bat, and over the final analysis it is kinder to draw a veil.

#### THE SOUTH AFRICAN TOUR: 1938-1939.

The tour of the M.C.C. team in South Africa under Walter Hammond's captaincy was conducted in the friendliest spirit, and it is safe to say that as a result cricket won many new adherents in a country whose first love has always been rugby football. Moreover, some of the batting and much of the fielding seen in the Tests was admirable, whilst financially the tour was the means of improving the position of the various cricket bodies in whose hands the welfare and development of the game then lay. For the first time in that country all the Test Matches were fought out on grass and with the eight-ball over, and this fact probably dominated the course of the games. With, in many places, little experience of the preparation of a turf wicket for three, let alone four, days' play, the South African authorities produced what was for the most part a smooth and unresponsive carpet with a dressing that bound but left no bone in the soil. On such a surface there could never be that balance between attack and defence on which in the long run sustained interest in a game depends: even on the batsmen it seemed to act like some strange narcotic, inducing them

to prefer an indefinite tenure of the crease to their proper business of making runs. The climax came in the final Test at Durban which, in spite of an unprecedented and superb performance by the English batsmen in the last innings, saw players and spectators alike leave the field, too tired to play and almost even to watch, above all thankful to have escaped from the futility of this *reductio ad absurdum* of a "timeless test."

The strength of the English batting can readily be gauged from the fact that seven men had averages of over 40 in the Tests and that, in spite of an average of 57 for the whole tour, room could only be found for Yardley in the first of the series when Hutton was not available. In contrast, the bowling figures make formidable reading: Verity's nineteen wickets in the tests cost him 29 each and Farnes's sixteen 32, whilst the two leg-spinners, Wright and Wilkinson, shared sixteen at a common rate of over 46! The South African bowlers fared a good deal worse, though Gordon, until hammered almost into insensibility at Durban, proved himself consistently hostile and a dangerous agent with the new ball, especially if there was any "green" in the wicket. For Hammond and Paynter the tour provided another series of triumphs, the former heading the Test Match averages with 87, and the latter scoring three centuries in them, of which his 243 in the third was a record for the series. Hutton, though curiously enough not making a century in the Tests, had a most successful tour, Edrich redeemed an alarming series of failures with a double century in the last, Valentine and Yardley delighted everyone by their enterprise, whilst Gibb found himself perfectly in accord with the tempo of the representative games, batting very soundly and with inexhaustible patience. A special word must be given to Ames who, besides averaging 59 in the big games, raised his Test Match catches to a figure surpassing Dick Lilley's previous record.

In the first Test at Johannesburg, Paynter made two hundreds and Gibb 93 and 106, but South Africa, in spite of a hat-trick by Goddard, countered strongly, and Hammond's delayed declaration in the second innings was proof that he saw no hope of forcing a win. In the second it was Hammond himself, Ames and Valentine whose centuries accounted for our 559 for 9 and South Africa had nothing to play for but a draw: in spite of most stubborn defence by Mitchell and Nourse they followed on 270 behind, but Van der Byl and Rowan shut and bolted the door. In the third match at Durban we won by an innings and 13 runs. Paynter 243 and Hammond 120 played free and attractive cricket to account for most of our 469 for 4 at which total the latter declared: then Farnes, Wright and Wilkinson bowled South Africa out for 103, and though Mitchell made an accomplished century and Rowan was a prolonged obstacle, we got home comfortably enough. Hammond won the toss again in the

Fourth Test—his eight consecutive successful guesses will take some beating—but the honours of the match were South Africa's. They bowled out England for 215, an excellent performance that suggested what they might have done had there at any other time been just a modicum of help in the pitch; and when they batted after further rain on a surface that caused Verity and Goddard to crack their fingers with glee Melville (67) began with a brilliant and classic assault which was taken up so well by his successors that at the second day's close the home side led by 34 with only three men out. Then a blank day made a draw almost certain, Melville declaring at 349 for eight, and England playing out time.

For the fifteen distinct records which the final match at Durban produced the reader must be referred to the contemporary *Wisden*, but mention must be made of the aggregate of runs scored, 1,981, Verity's 766 balls delivered, just exceeding J. C. White's figures for the Adelaide match in 1929, and the total duration of the contest, twelve days including two Sundays and a blank. To bring the apparently incredible into focus, two factors must be emphasized. In the first place a local rule governing the series of Tests empowered the groundsman to roll the wicket at any time after rain between one day's play and the next if, in his opinion, he could improve it thereby. Accordingly after the thunderstorms in the evenings of the third and seventh days the Kingsmead groundsman applied the heavy roller. Hot sun on each occasion the following morning completed a virtually new "cake," if anything easier in pace than the preceding one. Secondly, on this third and last concoction, the two best South African bowlers, Gordon and Langton, though they toiled on indefatigably, were both lame and sore. To say that the rest of the bowling was inconsiderable was to put it mildly. From the first day it was obvious that the match was to be a Marathon: the two old Oxford cricketers, Melville and Van der Byl, laid a firm foundation with an opening partnership of 131, but it was more than two hours before either hit a boundary! The latter, whom his contemporaries at Oxford will remember for largeness of heart as well as of body, took some nasty knocks from Farnes as he had done in the Varsity match some years before, but battled on undauntedly to make 125 in  $7\frac{1}{2}$  hours. With Nourse, Dalton and Grieveson all making runs—Nourse's 103 took him six hours—the innings closed for 530 late on the third day. To this England, with Ames as top scorer with 84, could reply with no more than 316, but Melville had clearly no alternative but to bat again. Once again, there was a fine opening partnership of 191, Van der Byl only just failing to repeat his first innings century and Mitchell making 103 by batting that was as graceful as it was watchful. Melville, though lame, played a delightful innings and all the middle batsmen made runs, so that though the English bowlers struggled on heroically, the total reached 411 and England had 696 to win. On the seventh day

Hutton and Gibb scored 78 together before Hutton was out for 55, and then Edrich and Gibb added 280 for the second wicket: Gibb, whose 120 took him nine hours and only included two 4's, nevertheless broke the back—and the heart—of the bowling, whilst Edrich at last overcame the hoodoo which had hitherto haunted him in Test Matches and, as much to his comrades' delight as to his own, went on to score 219. Hammond, taking not the slightest risk, made yet another hundred, sharing with Paynter in a partnership of 164, but, with Ames and Valentine together, down came the rain and the players left the field for the last time, the English to catch their boat in Cape Town, the South African bowlers, one expects, to go to bed for a week! Perhaps the greatest title to cricket fame of this historic match will prove to be that it drove the final nail into the coffin of timeless cricket.

#### THE WEST INDIANS IN 1939.

In spite of a discouraging start, an undue measure of rain, and the cancellation of their last seven matches by the onset of war, the West Indians took home with them, as they certainly left behind them in England, many happy memories. They were not a great side, depending unduly on the great George Headley in batting and on Constantine and Clarke in attack; but they were full of life, they played the game for enjoyment, and they were admirably led by their captain, R. S. Grant. At Lord's they were outplayed by an England side the length of whose batting tail might well have been disturbing against stronger opponents. Hutton made 196, batting as if there had been no break since his last home Test Match innings at the Oval, and Compton played beautifully for 120, but even so chief honours went to Headley who, with 106 and 107, made history by being the first man to make two hundreds in a Test Match at Lord's. Copson, playing in his first Test, took nine wickets and was by some way the best of the English bowlers. A month later at Old Trafford an almost blank first day and subsequent interruptions precluded any result, but there were passages of real interest. After England had lost 5 for 62 to some really good bowling by Clarke, Hardstaff, driving with effortless grace, made 76 and Hammond declared at 164 for 7. Then Grant, going in first, got 47 out of the first 56 by a furious and splendid assault, in which he hit Goddard for three sixes in an over and nearly decapitated an array of short legs; but after he left, only Headley (51) could do anything with Bowes who finished with an analysis of 6 for 33. There was now, however, no real chance of a finish, and the concluding stage was chiefly remarkable for Hammond's 100th catch in Test Match cricket.

At the Oval there was fine weather and a superlative wicket,

but Constantine was so accurate and varied his pace so cleverly that, in taking 5 for 75, he limited England's score to 352: Hutton got 73 and Hardstaff gave another beautiful display for 94. Headley and the two Stollmeyers then laid the foundations of a good score against an England attack deplorably weakened by the absence of Verity, Bowes and Copson and supported by very indifferent fielding: Weekes made a splendid century and the day closed with the West Indians 43 on, though with only 4 wickets to fall. On the following morning Constantine made 78 runs off less than 12 overs in an unforgettable display of hitting upon which Nichols and Perks with a demoralized field scattered to all parts of the compass were quite unable to place even momentary check. Amid a bewildering variety of strokes, surpassing the wildest flights of fancy, one six to the Vauxhall end off the back foot will never be forgotten by those who saw it.

Inevitably a sense of anti-climax and unreality accompanied the last hours of the match in which Hammond made yet another, if somewhat irregular, hundred. Hutton with 165 undefeated, brought his aggregate for the last two Oval Tests to 602 for twice out!

#### DOMESTIC CRICKET: 1938-1939.

##### *The Championship.*

Stimulated by a change in the system of reckoning points which enhanced the value of an outright win, the championship in the last two years of peace produced fewer drawn games, more enterprise, and consequently better entertainment than it had for a long time past. In both years Yorkshire headed the table, gaining in 1939 their third consecutive championship and their twenty-first in all. Their batting, despite injuries to Hutton in 1938 and to Sutcliffe in 1939, was extremely strong, whilst Verity, Bowes, Robinson and Smailes made up by far the best attack in the country, and it was supported by consistently fine and aggressive fielding. They owed much to Brian Sellers' astute and determined leadership, and to the wealth of their reserves which enabled them to field a still formidable side, no matter what demands the representative games made on them: but most of all, perhaps, to the collective spirit of the team, fostered by their long traditions of success, and sustained by that tough combativeness which has for nearly half a century been the hall-mark of Yorkshire cricket. In both years Middlesex were runners-up and this made their fourth consecutive *proxime accessit*. Compton and Edrich, when not requisitioned for the big games, did wonders, but without them the batting lacked body, though in Robertson they found a young batsman of admirable method and in the gigantic Jim Smith the highest,

though not the most scientific, hitter in the game. Smith's fast bowling had a good year in 1938, but next year Sims' leg-breaks held pride of place. His record of 142 wickets for less than 20 apiece was one of the best among all county bowlers. Gloucester, after a poor season in '38 despite Hammond's extraordinary average of 83 for over 2,000 runs in county matches, enjoyed a triumph the following year when under his leadership they finished third in the table and twice beat the champion Yorkshire side. Goddard had a wonderful season, his 181 wickets for his county costing only 14 apiece: at Bristol he took 30 wickets in a single week, and on three occasions claimed nine wickets in an innings. Scott, a young fast bowler, more than fulfilled the hopes formed of him the previous year.

### *Amateur Cricket.*

In 1938 the Gentlemen beat the Players at Lord's for only the second time since 1914. For this triumph they owed almost everything to the seven Light Blues included in their side. In their first innings of 411, after the Cambridge captain, Yardley, had played a splendid innings of 88, Bartlett—175 not out—hit the Players' bowling to all corners of the field: fiercer and more brilliant driving of fast bowling had not been seen in the match for many years. Then Farnes bowled superbly to take 8 for 41 and the Players were out for 218. Preferring to bat again, Hammond was able to declare, leaving the Players to get 366: this, against an admirably sustained attack by Farnes, Brown and Stephenson, they never looked like doing, though Edrich played a long and stubborn innings of 76. To Frank Woolley, who this year said farewell to first-class cricket, was accorded the honour of captaining the Players in this match.

The next year's game proved as disappointing as this had been notable, the Amateurs being out-played at all points: on a lively wicket several of their batsmen got nasty knocks from Bowes and Copson and in the final innings their resistance was hardly worthy of the traditions of the match.

Cambridge went through the season of 1938 without a single success, but at one time it looked as if they were going to win the match that mattered. Leading Oxford's first innings total of 317 by 108 runs and after a long delay for rain on the last day, they had five of them out for 69 and there was still an hour and a half to go; but the Oxford captain, Grover, helped by Eggar and Whitehouse, stemmed the tide. Previously Lomas had played beautifully, Dixon tenaciously, for Oxford, whilst Gibb, Thompson and Yardley had all scored heavily for Cambridge. Gibbs' 122 brought his season's total for the University to over 1,000, a success that

foreshadowed his remarkable achievements in South Africa six months later.

Next year Oxford were a strong batting side and the Cambridge bowling was weaker: with a first innings lead of 158 they piled on the runs at a great rate, Lomas and Proud, the Winchester freshman and a most powerful driver, putting on 169 for the second wicket and enabling Dixon to leave Cambridge 430 runs to get and all Tuesday to bat. They failed to get them—but only by 45 runs and with less than half an hour left to play. Most of their batsmen, notably Mann, Brodhurst and Webster had a hand in this most gallant rearguard action, but the hero of the day and of the match was Dickinson: taking guard when the score stood at 155 for 5 and over four hours remained for play, he batted with the utmost confidence and a charming variety of strokes for exactly 100, and until he was dismissed it seemed that Cambridge might yet achieve the impossible: not since Eustace Crawley's success in 1887 had a Cambridge freshman made a century in the University match. For Oxford Evans' double of 59 and nine wickets in the game was a notable performance.

School cricket in 1938 was rather less noteworthy than in some previous years. Eton, though they had a fine wicket-keeper in Fiennes, were an indifferent side and only a fighting innings by their captain, Boughey, and rain on the second evening saved them from probable defeat at the hands of Harrow. The latter were a good team and had a successful season, with admirable and consistent batting by Holt and clever spin-bowling by Hayward as the highlights. Oakley of Bedford and Mischler of St. Paul's each had the distinction of scoring over 1,000 runs for their school in the season and Lubbock had a fine all-round record for Charterhouse, but the outstanding performance of the season was that of the Wykehamist batsman, Proud, in the representative games at Lord's. For the Rest against the Lord's schools he made 84 and 102 in 90 and 49 minutes respectively by a display of driving which for power and security combined few school cricketers can ever have equalled, and followed this up by two less spectacular but eminently competent innings of 96 and 34 against the Army. At long last—in fact, for the first time since 1908—Harrow in 1939 tasted victory over Eton at Lord's, their captain, Lithgow, finishing the match with three straight drives to the pavilion in a scene of the wildest enthusiasm. Eton were not a strong side, but Harrow's success was the more notable inasmuch as they began the season with only two old colours: the match was played throughout with commendable enterprise and Crutchley, with an admirably played 115, went one better than his father, G. E. V., who had himself played a notable part in the 1908 win. There was no outstanding school team this year, nor perhaps any individual player of contemporary

first-class standard, but Charterhouse, Marlborough and Winchester had useful sides and the all-round figures of Lacy-Scott (Marlborough), Pawson (Winchester), Allen (Charterhouse) and Deighton (Denstone) were impressive. Sayer of Shrewsbury had a fine bowling record of 60 wickets for ten apiece.

### *The War Years*

Whilst during the winter of 1939-40 the Sheffield Shield matches were still played in Australia and Don Bradman tucked away yet another record by scoring over 1,200 runs in the series for an average of 132, cricketers in England were reconciling themselves to an indefinite divorce from the first-class game. Before the next year was out the Oval, which was at once commandeered for war purposes, had together with Old Trafford sustained severe damage from air-raids, whilst Lord's had become one of the main intake centres for the R.A.F.—who incidentally proved ideal tenants. There was of course no question of county cricket, though the Leagues continued to provide an afternoon's distraction for the workers of the north and were reinforced by a number of well-known professionals. But even in the south and under the sombre impact of the tragedy of France cricketers found consolation and distraction wherever their war duties allowed escape for a few hours into a saner world. The M.C.C. and the Forty Club tried to play as many schools as possible, and heroic veterans, returning to London after a day in the field, would, in the absence of taxis, shoulder their cricket bags for the pavement trudge home. But the most notable feature of the season was the appearance, thanks to private enterprise, of the British Empire and London Counties XI. The former wholly amateur, the latter almost entirely professional, included a number of really good players and with a long programme of matches did admirable service in keeping something like first-class standards alive, and in displaying them for the first time on many club grounds. This good work they continued to do throughout the war years and in course of it raised many thousands of pounds for war and other charities.

In 1941 the Army met the R.A.F. in four official one-day matches in which the standard of play was surprisingly high and the public appetite for it attested in an attendance of 13,000 at Lord's: 1942 saw a notable extension, both in number and in area of distribution, of matches between service sides, whilst Sir Pelham Warner, to whose courage and unquenchable enthusiasm our cricket through the war years owes an incalculable debt, went one further in organizing two 2-day games at Lord's, the first between his own XI and the Army and the second between Middlesex with Essex and Kent with Surrey. In the latter a Bank Holiday crowd



of over 22,000 watched with enthusiastic appreciation some fine bowling by the Dulwich schoolboy, Bailey, some first-class wicket-keeping by Evans of Kent, and a superb display of driving in the best Malvern tradition by E. R. T. Holmes.

In December of that year the Advisory County Committee met for the first time since the start of the war and at a subsequent meeting four months later resolved to ask the M.C.C. to appoint a Select Committee to consider the many problems inherent in the ultimate resumption of first-class cricket. Under the chairmanship of Sir Stanley Jackson a body of cricketers both amateur and professional was assembled which commanded unchallengeable experience over the whole field of the game, technical, administrative and financial alike, and in spite of the most pressing preoccupations they produced in March 1944, and with convincing unanimity, a comprehensive report. They condemned without hesitation all proposals to tamper with the fundamentals of the game, and pronounced decisively in favour of three-day matches as opposed to the two-day experiment of 1919 and against any division of the time available. Sunday play was unanimously turned down. Other recommendations were for a return to the six-ball over, for a new ball after 55 overs as opposed to 200 runs, and for the right to declare at any time on the first day of a three-day match. But above all, they emphasized the importance of a sound psychological approach to the game and stressed the duty of captains in particular to animate their sides into enterprise and the pursuit of a win rather than the avoidance of defeat.

Meanwhile, in the summer of 1943, as the campaign in North Africa grew to a triumphant conclusion and the invasion of Italy approached, cricketers, wherever they could, resumed the game with lighter hearts and even began, what they had so long denied themselves, to talk of cricket after the war. Nearly fifty matches were played at Lord's: even the most modest of fixtures found a cluster of enthusiasts in front of the Tavern or sunning themselves on the Mound, whilst on two August days huge crowds watched England beat the Dominions by eight runs. Thanks to a fine century by Ames and some sensational bowling by Compton, England had a lead of 200 on the first innings and in their second Robins and Holmes redeemed a disastrous start and were so able to present a target of 360 to win in four hours. Dempster played superbly for 113, but with seven out for 218 the Dominions looked fairly in the cart, but the Australian Sismey and the West Indian Clarke added 108 most gallant runs and kept everyone in their seats till close on seven o'clock. Another notable feature of this season was the appearance of the Royal Australian Air Force playing as a regular side. At once their tremendous zest for the game appealed to all who saw them, and before the season was over the wicket-

keeping of Sismey, strongly reminiscent of Oldfield, and the batting of Miller had made a great impression.

Against a background of flying bombs and mounting exhilaration as the drama of invasion unfolded itself, cricket in 1944 more than maintained its hold on such time and interest as the country could spare from its great preoccupations. The return of Hammond from Egypt and the reappearance of Hutton, now happily recovered from a bad break to his arm, brought new lustre to the five representative games played at Lord's: both showed that they had lost little, if any, of their pre-war form and had a large share in England's two wins over Australia in matches that delighted everyone with their enterprise and colour. The R.A.A.F. extended their programme and made hosts of friends wherever they played: with little time for practice and often coming straight on to the field from operational duties, they maintained a surprisingly high standard, and the slow bowling of Cristofani and Ellis made a real impression. Up and down the country county executives, encouraged by the loyalty of their members in continuing their support, sponsored an increasing number of games, with Birmingham taking the lead in enterprise with a Festival Week during which the young Notts player, R. T. Simpson, batted with consistency and impressive technique.

### *The Victory Tests of 1945*

With the coming of victory in Europe and the reinforcement of the R.A.A.F. by some more fine players of experience, the five "unofficial Test matches," now extended to three days apiece and officially rated as "first class," focused enormous interest and produced cricket of truly high class. The first game, at Lord's at Whitsuntide—and on the Monday the gates had to be closed—saw Australia triumphant on the very stroke of time by six wickets: the Australians' batting had been admirable, especially that of Miller (105) and Hassett (77), and in spite of fairly consistent scoring by England, for whom Robertson with 53 and 84 played fine cricket, we could set them no more than 107 to get, but there were only 70 minutes left. With twenty minutes to go they still lacked 40, but the massive Pepper hit with violence and discrimination combined and, with Hammond setting his team a fine example in wasting not a minute of time in the field, Australia just beat the clock. The fielding all through the match was superb.

A month later at Sheffield, England won by 41 runs in a see-saw match of sustained interest. Hammond made a masterly 100 against some varied and accurate bowling, and our first-innings score of 286 procured us a lead of 139: in the second we could never really break through the Australians' out-cricket and at one time

had lost 7 wickets for 123; then Griffith and Pollard made a stand and Australia, with all the third day to go, had 330 runs to make to win. When, thanks to Whittington, Workman and Hassett, 171 were on the board with only two men out, victory seemed well within their grasp, but Pope and Pollard never lost their length or life, and in the end we won with a little to spare.

In the third match England, experimenting with three young players in Dewes, Carr and White who were, if the truth be told, rather outclassed, lost by four wickets. Hutton played two superb innings of 104 and 69. About 90,000 spectators, a record for any three-day game at Lord's, watched the next match, but though there was much good cricket to enjoy, there was never any real prospect of a finish. Though Miller once again played superbly for 118, Sismey took over four hours to amass 59 runs, and with stoppages for rain and bad light Australia's innings of 388 was prolonged until lunch on the second day. To this England replied with 468 for 7, Hammond on the third morning driving with immense power and Washbrook and Edrich enjoying a long partnership.

Australia had no difficulty, in spite of a bad start, in playing out time. If, as a result of this game, there had been any suspicions that our visitors were content to hold on to their match lead in the rubber, they were completely dispelled a fortnight later at Old Trafford. Here on a wicket that was never difficult but, unlike the dead easy pitch at Lord's, always gave the bowlers some help, and in a match which for sustained and taut excitement recalled memories of the Leeds battle in 1938, England won by six wickets. The replacement of Roberts by Phillipson greatly strengthened the English attack, and he and Pope bowled grandly to dismiss Australia for 198—Miller 77 not out. With Hutton (64) and Hammond (57) at their best in countering some varied and accurate bowling, our score reached 159 for 3, but our final lead was only 70. When at lunch on the third day Australia's score stood at 120 for 8 wickets her position seemed hopeless, but Cristofani, helped by heroic defence by Williams, launched a memorable counter attack and by hitting of the most brilliant description scored 110 not out. England had thus three hours in which to score 141, and though in the end they managed it with a comfortable margin, the cricket remained tense and absorbing to the end. Phillipson came out of the match with fine bowling figures, but none could look back on it with more complete satisfaction than Griffith who made seven catches behind the wicket (six in the second innings) and did not let a single bye. The match at Old Trafford had been dramatic enough, but the curtain at Lord's was rung down still more sensationally in a game between England and the combined Dominions. The latter opened prosperously with 307 to which Donnelly, the left-handed batsman from New Zealand

who had shown such great potentialities on the English tour of 1937, contributed 133. Once again Hammond countered with a century and England were only 20 runs behind; then Miller eclipsed all his previous triumphs at Lord's by a display of hitting which the memories of even the oldest habitués could not parallel: in less than three hours he made 185 runs, including seven 6's and thirteen 4's; bombarding the pavilion with drives of devastating power, one of which pitched on the awning of the top tier, while another penetrated into the sacred precincts of the Long Room. As if this was not enough, Hammond added yet another to his quiverful of records by scoring a second hundred and thus passing Jack Hobbs' previous feat of six double hundreds. After that England's ultimate defeat by 45 runs ten minutes from time paled into insignificance, though gallant batting by the two old Cambridge blues, Davies and Griffith, sustained the interest to the end.

#### THE UNIVERSITIES AND SCHOOLS.

In contrast with the last war, when cricket together with practically every other activity there ceased to exist, the Universities in the years of this war, thanks to service "short course" students and exempted scientists and "medicos," continued to play it, and from 1940 inclusive elevens from Oxford and Cambridge met in one-day matches at Lord's for charity, even attracting gates comparable with those of recent pre-war games. In only one of these, and then by the skin of their teeth, did Oxford avoid defeat, a record hardly surprising to those who knew the sharply contrasting background to the game at the two Universities, though it is only just to Oxford to add that they were severely handicapped both in numbers, in the average of age, and in the loss of their University ground. There was, of course, no question of the award of any "blues." At Oxford in these years E. K. Scott was the best all-round player, whilst Crutchley's batting and G. A. Wheatley's wicket-keeping challenged peace-time standard. Cambridge, where a far bigger programme provided both better practice and a truer test, turned out some good cricketers. Most notable perhaps was the Rugbeian, J. R. Bridger, who averaged over 50 in three of his four years, but in 1945 J. G. Dewes and the Hon. L. R. White gained much wider fame by being selected for the England side against Australia at Lord's.

Though quite rightly the public schools strove to maintain their cricket on something like normal lines, the game there had to struggle with many handicaps: the demands of the J.T.C.'s and of war-time agriculture made heavy inroads on the time available, ground and coaching staffs became progressively reduced and ageing, equipment was hard to come by, and the new entry from

preparatory schools, many of them evacuated and understaffed, knew less and less about the game; whereas the average age of visiting teams increased to the verge of senility, that of the school elevens dropped to a year or more below the peace-time figure. No wonder, therefore, that the standard of cricket fell seriously away, but the spirit was preserved and the natural ability of many players rose superior to all obstacles.

In 1940 Winchester had a good eleven, and the best batsman of the year in their captain, Pawson, who averaged over 100 for the school season. Eton beat Harrow by one wicket in an agonising finish. Next year Haileybury had a fine all-round side, but they might have been hard put to it to beat Dulwich, for whom the bowling of Kiddle and the all-round cricket of Bailey and Mallett were most impressive. The two last named almost monopolised the limelight of 1942: together they made over 1,000 runs and took 122 wickets for six apiece, subsequently proving that they could fully hold their own in better company. Eton and Charterhouse both went through the season undefeated. Eton again, Repton and Rugby were strong in 1943, but the latter fell with an unexpected crash before Marlborough, admirably led by their captain, Robertson, who took 12 wickets in the match. Keeling of Eton was probably the best batsman of the year and scored 129 and 65 for Lord's schools *v.* The Rest. In 1944 Dulwich again were outstanding with a team devoid of particular stars, but so strong that it won all eight of its inter-school matches. Carr, the Repton captain, had a fine all-round record and Dewes of Aldenham and White of Eton were the best batsmen.

The year of victory saw many happy reunions and a strengthening of opposition in the club games against the schools: Eton and Winchester both had good batting sides with their captains, Blake, who made five centuries, and Webb, the most consistent performers, but neither team was strong in attack. Charterhouse, whose record against Eton in the war years is strikingly good, had a young batsman of high promise in May and a good all-rounder in Rimall. But the outstanding record was that of Campbell of Canford, who, besides showing promise as a stumper, made more than a thousand runs, by highly aggressive batting, in school cricket.

#### 1946: ENTHUSIASM—AND THE RAIN

When the Indian touring eleven wrote a further line of cricket history by arriving by air in April 1946, not even the most pessimistic of them could have envisaged the deplorable summer that lay before them and English cricket. The first half of May was reasonable and there were days of sunshine in June and early July, but August was unspeakable—the season as a whole must rank with those of 1879,

1888 and 1902. It was the more tantalizing inasmuch as from the very start it was obvious that never had the public appetite for the game been keener: even as it was, attendances, given any sort of encouragement, were splendid. Membership with a number of Counties exceeded all expectations, and substantial revenues were forthcoming from which to meet the inevitable increases in wages, upkeep and travelling. It would, of course, be idle to pretend that the general playing standard of the old days was recaptured: Yorkshire, for instance, would be the first to admit that their batting did not even approach what it was when Sutcliffe, Holmes and Leyland were in their prime: the majority of Counties lacked "concrete" in their batting fabric even against an attack that could not in general be described as "tidy." The plain fact was that the seasoned players were seven years older and the reinforcements very thin in match experience of any real class.

But there were compensations: most of the leading batsmen of 1939 seemed to have lost little, if any, of their form. Hammond, Hutton and Compton were still, on any standard, great players: Washbrook, if lacking their genius, was much more than competent, and Hardstaff played an innings of outstanding quality to win the Test Match at Lords. The fielding of the English side was consistently fine, Evans' wicket-keeping in the Oval game elicited comparison with Oldfield, and, if some of our attack was rather humdrum, Bedser at least provided something to talk about by taking eleven wickets in each of his first two Tests. Moreover County Captains, almost without exception, responded to the appeal of the Select Committee and inspired their sides with the will to win rather than draw games, with the result that, considering the weather, an astonishing proportion reached a definite result—though when they went so far as to attempt that end by means of agreed declarations on an almost stillborn first innings, the M.C.C. very properly intervened. A reversion to the six ball over and the right to claim a new ball after fifty-five overs constituted changes from the 1939 regime.

The Indian team, under the captaincy of the Nawab of Pataudi, made friends wherever they played, for their batting was full of grace and enterprise and their fielding keen and agile. It is true that they failed to extend their opponents in the Tests, but conditions were against them, and the general view was that had those games been played in India a very different story might have been told. In Merchant they had a great batsman, who scored with splendid consistency throughout the tour: his method has not perhaps the fluency of some of his colleagues, but he always made batting look easy and his technique was faultless. The Nawab, unlucky in illness and injury, only played intermittently and his form was inconsistent, but at its best still reminiscent of his great innings in the University match. From the day on which, at the Oval in the first fortnight of

their tour, Sarawate and Banerjee broke the last wicket record partnership by scoring a century apiece, it was obvious that their collective batting strength was remarkable: it may indeed have proved an embarrassment to their Captain who never seemed able to arrive at a regular batting order, a factor which may account in some measure for a curious inconsistency in the team's batting performance. They had no one of any real pace and their spin bowling was not impressive. Mankad however, with his immaculate length and changes of pace, was the best left-hand bowler playing, and Amarnath, though his record for the tour as a whole is curiously unimpressive, bowled extremely well in the Tests. In the first of these, at Lords, after India had made 200 on a wicket that was neither easy nor really difficult, he "shot" Hutton, Washbrook, Compton and Hammond for 70 runs, and Hardstaff and Gibb had to battle to avert disaster. Eventually they turned to attack, and Hardstaff went on to score 205 not out in an innings that enchanted all those who saw it. Thereafter India was always struggling and eventually went down by 10 wickets. A month later Pataudi put England in to bat on a soft wicket only to see our English batsmen build up a score of 250 before the fourth wicket fell: then on the second day an hour's play saw six wickets fall for 58 to Amarnath and Mankad, and Merchant and Mushtaq Ali batted splendidly in an opening partnership of 124, but in another sensational hour good bowling by Pollard and Bedser lowered seven Indian wickets for 36 runs. The third day was one of fascinating fluctuation: India were all out for 170, England lost 5 wickets for 84, Compton restored the balance with a masterly 71 not out, and Hammond was able to declare leaving India 278 to get in three hours. Splendid bowling by Bedser gave us a flying start, and though Hazare and Modi played bravely, the last Indian pair had to survive a quarter of an hour and a new ball to save the match: survive they did, to give an excited crowd one more proof that a drawn game can be more gripping and indeed satisfying than many that are won and lost. The bowling of Amarnath and Mankad, who took all 15 English wickets that fell, as of Bedser who followed up his eleven at Lords with a similar bag, was throughout impressive in hostility and accuracy.

It was a tragedy that with public interest in the Test Matches fully sustained and a general feeling that India might well shake our hold on the rubber, rain should have ruined the Oval game. No play was possible until 5 o'clock on the first day, and then Merchant and Mankad batted serenely for an hour and a half; Monday was fine and a very big crowd saw the total raised to 331, of which Merchant made 128 in an innings which, though never spectacular, was a model of precision, quick sighting, and easy and accurate foot work. The English attack was far from impressive and only Edrich seemed able to get any life out of an impassive pitch, but our fielding was

collectively of a high order. England had two hours batting, but were tightly pegged down by some admirable bowling by Amarnath and Mankad and could get no further than 95 for three. There was no play at all on the third day. Notable in the Indian tour were their annihilating victories over the M.C.C. and Middlesex—in the latter of which Hazare made 193 not out—a score of 490 for five against Yorkshire (Hazare 244 not out), and two innings by Merchant 242 not out v. Lancashire and 181 v. Essex, the latter innings played against time and leading to a wonderful win for his side by one wicket.

In the County Championship Yorkshire secured their fourth consecutive success and Middlesex once again were runners up: it was unfortunate that the second meeting between the sides should have coincided with the Oval Test Match, but Yorkshire were probably the better side if only for the sustained accuracy with which their bowlers bowled to a well-placed and aggressive field. Apart from Hutton's, their batting figures looked anything but impressive, but Sellers, as always a determined and astute captain, played several fighting innings of decisive importance in the last six weeks of the season. Middlesex, at full strength, were certainly the best batting side in the country, but their bowling was inconsistent: Robins was still a splendid cricketer, inspiring his side with his own vitality, and always liable to make runs, take wickets or make a sensational catch when it was most needed. Lancashire were a sound and workmanlike side for whom Washbrook scored with splendid consistency and Roberts showed improved form with the ball, but perhaps the most marked feature of the Championship as a whole was the success of the three western sides—Somerset, Gloucester and Glamorgan. The former were less incalculable than in the old days, but even so surprised the cricket world by running up vast scores against both the Indians and Yorkshire; they had a strong amateur contingent, and Gimblett, Wellard and Andrews were once again fine cricketers. Hammond's batting and Goddard's bowling would alone have made Gloucester a force to be reckoned with, but they had good support, whilst for Glamorgan two comparative veterans in Clay and Davies did splendid work: indeed Clay at the age of 48 was in length and flight the best slow bowler in England. Kent, after a dreadful start, recovered well.

The Gentlemen and Players match was a general disappointment, for after the Players had made 399 for five wickets on a true wicket against an attack that could never be rated better than painstaking, rain ruined any chance of a fighting answer and only Hammond (70) could exceed thirty in either innings. Oxford cricket achieved a strong and welcome revival under the vigorous captaincy of Macindoe; the side, with a notable contingent of ex-service and Dominion players, must have been by far the oldest ever to take the field in a University match: their records in the Parks was impressive,



but they lost some of their form on tour and at Lords they owed almost everything to M. P. Donnelly. His dominating innings of 142 by common agreement had not been surpassed within living memory of the Match for combined grace, security and power. The Cambridge batting was very weak, but at Lords they bowled at least as well as Oxford. The placing of the field throughout the game, with at times only two men more than 12 yards from the bat, raised the eyebrows of many experienced cricketers.

School cricket continued to have its difficulties: labour and equipment and coaching were still short, grounds had in some cases gravely deteriorated, the new entry from evacuated or undermanned preparatory schools sadly lacked sound cricket grounding, and the call-up meant that school sides were still on the average nine months or so younger than pre-war. Moreover these sides were much more severely tested by demobilised club teams. Of the leading schools Charterhouse may well have been the best, and of individuals Campbell of Canford for the second year running made over 1,000 runs, an all-time school record, twice scoring over 200 in school matches at a prodigious pace.

#### M.C.C. IN AUSTRALIA, 1946-7

The ink was hardly dry on the Japanese terms of surrender that marked the ending of the War in the East than Australia was making plain her earnest desire for a visit from a M.C.C. team after the English season of 1946. Some of those who knew their history best counselled another year's wait while our cricket made some sort of recovery from the effects of the War. But when the issue became public, and patriotic considerations were advanced in both countries, the decision was almost foregone, and by the New Year the Marylebone Club had committed itself to the ninth tour of Australia under its auspices. As luck would have it dry pitches in 1946 were a rare luxury, and there had been little cricket of a character to test and disclose our resources when the bulk of the party was named in mid-July. The general feeling was that, whatever were the limitations of English bowling, the batsmanship at Hammond's command was powerful enough to give the Australians a run for their money, and to satisfy their spectators, who had had to endure nine summers without a Test Match.

In the result the tour enjoyed the strongest public support, and there were phases in all five games when the cricket reached something like true Test Match quality; but from the English viewpoint it proved a somewhat disappointing expedition. The Tests, instead of being played to a finish, were limited to six days, England being thus able to force two draws, the remaining three matches being won by Australia. The old enemy, captained once more by Bradman and with an influx of several capable young all-rounders, presented

a stiff proposition. To be beaten was indeed anything but a disgrace. The disappointment lay rather in the failure of our team, under Hammond's captaincy, to coalesce into an effective fighting machine. They seemed hardly re-attuned to Test cricket, and suffered by comparison with their opponents in two vital respects; in fielding generally, and catching in particular, and in the art of leadership. While there were some notable batting performances, first by Edrich and Washbrook, later by Compton and Hutton, and one new batsman of Test Match parts emerged in Yardley, Australian spin bowling, as in time past, tended to induce a sense of insecurity not truly justified by its merits, while the unexpected failure of Hammond as a batsman hung heavy, both on himself and on his team. Hutton was never his best self, and Compton took time to acclimatize himself to the atmosphere of Tests in Australia. With Voce unable, after so long an absence from cricket, to reproduce the skill that had made him so fine a bowler on Australian pitches on the two previous tours, the burden of the bowling fell on Wright and Bedser, whose efforts elicited the highest encomiums from Bradman at the end of the series, and would no doubt have been more accurately reflected on the score-sheet had the catches been held. Hammond's bowling plight would have been much worse had not Yardley disclosed himself as a man who could keep an end going inexpensively and quite often break a partnership. Brought in after the first Test, Evans kept wicket exceptionally well, and indeed from the English viewpoint was the find of the series.

For the fifth time, and after an interval of eight years, Bradman dominated a Test series, now as much by his subtle and sympathetic handling of a relatively inexperienced side as by his own powers with the bat. There was no question of his commanding in quite full measure all the virtues that had made him pre-eminent in the 'thirties. He needed—and he had—some luck early in his innings. The harmony between eye and limb was not attained, it seemed, without a struggle between mind and matter. But the longer he stayed the better he played: the last stages of his 234 at Sydney, when Australia wanted runs quickly, contained stroke-play of a quality that even he has rarely exceeded. If he had failed in the first Test, as he so nearly did, the rubber could well have run a wholly different course.

In Miller the Australians possessed the outstanding all-rounder on either side: with a batting average of 76, and sixteen wickets at 20 runs each he came into his own as a cricketer of the highest class judged by the most exacting standards. There was a virility and power about all he did, and not least in his fielding, that arouse inevitable memories of Jack Gregory. Barnes proved himself a desperately hard man to get out, specially strong off the right foot, while Morris, the left-hander, after a shaky start, came splendidly

into his own with three hundreds in a row. He too is predominantly a back player. Apart from Toshack, a slow-medium left-arm bowler operating from over the wicket, of steady but somewhat negative method, all the Australian bowlers were good for runs, as also was Tallon, their usually admirable wicket-keeper. Lindwall's speed, allied with Miller's, the leg-spin of Dooland and McCool, Johnson's off-breaks, with Toshack to put the brake on if need be, gave Bradman a variety that usually compensated for the fact that none of them was a world-beater in the O'Reilly or the Macdonald sense. A word must be added of the fielding, and not least the throwing, which were uniformly swift and certain.

Brisbane lived up to its reputation for vast margins of victory, but now for the first time Australia were winners. Bradman, after an agonizing hour, and with both opening batsmen already dismissed and his own score 28, snicked a wide uppish-length ball into the slips, the fielders close at hand all appealing for a catch when Bradman stayed his ground. He was given not out, and stayed a full day more, scoring 187, and with the infinitely patient Hassett adding 276 for the third wicket. Thereafter Australia went on to make 645, a crushing score that might have been barely respectable but for the catches missed. Of these there were five, three offered by Hassett, whose resistance lasted seven hours, one each by Bradman and McCool, who made respectively 90 and 93 more runs after offering chances. After England had made 21 for one, a series of thunderstorms produced pitches of fantastic properties for the remainder of the match. There was some remarkable batsmanship in the lost cause, and the end came on the fifth evening.

There were plenty of excuses after Brisbane, but none after the first day at Sydney, which was the most disastrous by far in the series: by nightfall England with 219 on the board had lost eight wickets, and with them in all probability the rubber. On a pitch that was perfectiv true, though the ball could be turned, Johnson and McCool reduced batsmen of high repute to nervous impotence; all except Edrich, who fought gallantly and well for the 71 with which he finally scotched his ill-repute as a Test cricketer. Australia achieved a lead of 404 on first innings, Bradman and Barnes made 234 apiece, this being Bradman's seventeenth century in Tests although his first at Sydney. The total of 659 was a new highest in Australia. Nine hours remained (most of the second day having been lost) when England embarked on their second innings. England entered on the last morning with 247 for three on the board, Edrich not out 86. Upon him and Hammond, also not out, rested the hopes of a draw. When Hammond was tempted to drive a leg-break to deep mid-on, who had been specially stationed for the stroke, the odds grew very long, and, though Edrich reached his first century against Australia, all was over by tea-time. As at

Brisbane the luck had not been kind. Wright's analysis of one for 169 was a grotesque reward for much magnificent bowling in which the bat was beaten time and again. But England had of course been utterly outplayed.

The rest of the series was much more evenly fought. The Melbourne Test at the New Year had several very distinct fluctuations: on the first day, despite the breakdowns of Edrich and Voce, the first six Australians were put out on the plumbest of pitches for 192, but McCool took charge of the situation in a most impressive manner, and, going on to his hundred next day, brought the full total to 365; again, when at the second day's end England were 147 for one, Edrich 85 not out, England's position was very favourable: and though there was a sad collapse in the morning, assisted by an l.b.w. decision in the case of Edrich which surprised all who were in a position to judge as well as many in the Press Box who were not, Australia's batting when they went in again with a lead of 14 lacked some of its usual confidence, and England were still well in the hunt when at one o'clock on the fifth day the seventh wicket fell for 341. But now Lindwall (100) and Tallon (92) were suffered to add 154 at the furious speed of two runs a minute, and, finely as they drove, England's field tactics were anything but impressive. Thus finally it became a matter of saving the game, and that this was achieved was chiefly due to Washbrook, who played the innings of his career (thus far) for 112, and to Yardley, who followed his 61 in the first innings and a match analysis of five for 117, including Bradman's wicket in both innings, by taking out his bat for 53. When time came England were 240 behind, with three wickets standing.

Australia won the rubber by drawing the Fourth Test at Adelaide. The match took place in particularly humid and oppressive heat and on an utterly lifeless pitch, with the rather natural result that the bat generally mastered the ball. Hutton (94) and Compton (147) redeemed themselves in England's opening effort of 460, the latter playing probably the best English innings in the series. Lindwall finished off the tail by taking three wickets in four balls of bewildering speed, but though Bedser bowled Bradman for 0, the Australians, thanks to Morris's 122 and Miller's 141 not out, achieved a lead of 27. By dint of their most impressive piece of out-cricket in the series Australia had eight Englishmen out for 255, and Compton and Evans found themselves face to face with defeat. But the wicket-keeper, apparently enjoying the situation, stayed in a hundred minutes before his first run came, while Compton, always at his best in such a predicament, farmed the bowling and reached his second century of the match. Hammond declared, leaving Australia 314 in 3½ hours on a pitch as good as new, but Bradman declined the challenge, Morris emulated Compton with yet another century, and that was that.

Hammond had played through the Fourth Test though plagued with lumbago. He did not take the field again in Australia, the captaincy devolving on Yardley. The Fifth Test, on a pitch which gave bowlers more than a suggestion of help, was as exciting a match as could be wished for, and it belonged to anybody almost right up to the moment of Australia's winning by five wickets on the fifth evening. Ill luck continued to follow the team, for, after Hutton had fought through the first day for an undefeated innings of 122, he was attacked by tonsillitis and took no further part. It is unnecessary to expand on what his loss meant. Lindwall's fine fast bowling (seven for 63) put out England for 280, to which Australia, equally at the mercy of Wright (seven for 105) replied with 253. Only Compton (76) distinguished himself in England's second innings of 186. Australia, in search of 214 to win, lost Morris and Barnes for 51, and just afterwards Bradman, having scored 2, gave a fairly easy slip catch off Wright. If it had been held it is very improbable Australia would have won, for they would have had none left likely to be impressive against Wright, who was regularly turning the ball several inches. Bradman and Hassett now engaged in a long and incredibly tense duel with Wright and Bedser, each of whom had several moral successes, but 98 had been added and all was over barring miracles before Bradman left for a 63 more valuable than some of his hundreds. Miller took his life in his hands, and the match and the rubber ended on an audacious, thrilling note. It was ironical, but surely it pointed a lesson, that in the end not our bowling but our batsmanship failed, though faced by no such formidable proposition as Wright had presented to the Australians. Still, there were several comforting things, and not least was Yardley's thoughtful handling of the side.

M.C.C. flew to New Zealand for a short, concentrated tour lasting three weeks and including a Test Match. Rain in this prevented an innings apiece being decided, but Hammond, who announced his retirement before starting for home, gave wide pleasure with a free and attractive 79 in his last Test. The occasion served also to introduce a young left-handed batsman of great possibilities in B. Sutcliffe, while older hands such as Cowie and Hadlee gave reminders of their skill.

### THE 1947 SOUTH AFRICANS

1947 was a summer that will long be memorable in English cricket. The South Africans, after a gap of twelve years, were with us, bringing not the wet weather traditionally associated with them but prolonged weeks of hot sunshine. After threatening to fight England very hard for the rubber, they were unlucky enough to strike two spells of rain in July at the time of the Third and Fourth Tests, so

that their final record, like that of England in Australia, was distinctly unflattering to their skill.

England escaped by the skin of their teeth in the first Test at Nottingham; only the match-saving stand between Compton (163) and Yardley (99) and a spirited 74 from Evans following it redeemed an otherwise abysmal performance. The Trent Bridge pitch deservedly came in for strong malediction; it was sad to see the play at this historic home of cricket so governed by the unnatural ease of the pitch that only three first-class matches out of fifteen could be finished. Nevertheless at the start on the first day there was a little to be had from the pitch in the raw, damp atmosphere, had England's bowlers commanded the accuracy to keep the batsmen playing. As it was, South Africa made 533, their highest score in a Test, and their captain, Alan Melville played the biggest individual innings (189). Nourse (149) batted almost as well, and England from then onward fought a long rearguard action. When Yardley joined Compton for the fifth wicket of the second innings before tea on the third day, England being still 155 behind, it was a matter of whether the match would end before nightfall. But these two added 237, batting with great skill and discretion. South Africa lost the certainty of victory when Yardley was missed at slip early on the last morning off the admirably persevering Tuckett, for they were not separated until after lunch. Finally Melville did not attempt the proposition of making 227 in two hours twenty minutes. Such was the standard of England's bowling and fielding that he may well feel in retrospect it would have been a fair risk: but he himself was very lame (though not too incommoded to make a second graceful, easy hundred), and he had only three other Test batsmen of experience.

England's showing at Lord's was sufficient of an improvement to bring victory, only the second in the ten Tests played since the War. They were indebted for it to a marathon stand of 370 by Compton and Edrich, followed by some brilliant bowling by Wright, who as a strategic manoeuvre had been omitted at Nottingham. Wright took ten for 175 on a plumb pitch, and not the least encouraging part of a happy occasion was the improvement in the fielding, particularly close to the bat. South Africa were very far from being humiliated. The accuracy of their bowling and fielding were an object-lesson, and while six of them made runs in one innings or the other the performance *par excellence* was again provided by Melville, who reached his fourth successive hundred against England in Tests.

The dice were loaded against South Africa at Manchester and Leeds, where wet pitches were always giving some aid to the bowlers. There was another long stand between Compton and Edrich at Old Trafford, 228 this time, and it was a much more brilliant affair than the last, for the pitch when they came together was a horror, and

two cheap wickets had fallen in answer to South Africa's first innings of 339. England won by seven wickets with less than an hour to spare, Nourse (115) having played a glorious attacking innings in a very difficult situation, as he was to do again at Leeds. Here England won in three days, the match being notable for Hutton, after a spell of ill-luck, contributing a classical century on a very awkward pitch in his first Test in Yorkshire. The South African second innings was brought to a remarkable end by K. Cranston, the Lancashire captain, who, playing as an all-rounder in his second Test, and bowling medium-pace, took the last four wickets in the same over.

Everyone was glad that South Africa recovered her form so notably in the last Test at the Oval, and few would have begrudged her the victory that might easily have come her way. This time the weather was fine and hot, and our visitors were seen in their true colours. Though Compton made his fourth Test hundred of the summer—and a scintillating one it was, scored in an hour and threequarters—the hero of the match was Mitchell who followed 120 in one innings with 189 not out in the next, and batted in all thirteen and a half hours, or a few minutes longer than Hutton when he broke all records at the Oval nine years earlier. South Africa were always fighting after England, pegged down by the exceptional accuracy of Mann and A. Rowan, had made a somewhat pawky 427 in the first innings, and Mitchell's imperturbable, unwearying, quiet batsmanship was as wholly in accord with the situation as with his own temperament. For a spell on the last evening it seemed that South Africa might actually make the 451 she had been set in the fourth innings, and while the chance was evident Mitchell shewed his strokes as freely as Nourse himself, who fully deserved the hundred that he just missed; then when wickets fell, he closed up again, and denied England success, there being three wickets standing at the end with South Africa 28 runs short. So one of the happiest series on record ended on a combative note, and when Melville's team sailed a month later they took with them countless friendships and also the best record apart from Tests, of any touring team, since the Australians of 1934.

#### DOMESTIC CRICKET: COMPTON'S RISE TO FAME

The University Match of 1947 and Gentlemen and Players were both drawn. In the first, after H. A. Pawson (135) and W. G. Keighley (99), former captains of Winchester and Eton, had begun the match with a first-rate partnership of 226 for Oxford, Cambridge saved the day in their follow-on. Oxford again were the more accomplished side, but Cambridge had improved, and G. L. Willatt, their captain, and T. E. Bailey, who saved them in the fourth

innings, came into the Gentlemen's team. The Players, after having the worse of the wicket, would have beaten the Gentlemen but for a stand by Yardley and Cranston. In some respects the match was disappointing, but Fletcher, with only two months' first-class cricket for Surrey behind him, made a most auspicious 77, and M. P. Donnelly monopolised the first day with an innings of 162 not out which roused all present to the heights of enthusiasm. None could remember a finer innings in this match, and few indeed can have been played anywhere that bettered it for ease and grace of stroke and precision of timing.

After Test Matches had held the stage in mid-season there was a stirring fight for the County Championship between Middlesex and Gloucestershire which produced unprecedented interest and culminated in the deserved success of Middlesex. Finally Denis Compton drew upon himself all honour and glory by taking his aggregate for the season to 3816 runs, including eighteen centuries. Thus he eclipsed the respective records of Hayward and Hobbs, and became by popular acclaim the idol of the day. The achievements of Edrich at the end were somewhat overshadowed, but he too improved on Hayward's 3518 by a matter of 21 runs. Edrich had taken 67 wickets in early August when a strained back prevented his bowling another ball: otherwise he would probably have come very near J. Parks' unique all-round achievement in 1937.

Compton (90) and Edrich (80) stood clear ahead in the batting averages, but the fact that seven other cricketers, Washbrook, Ames, Hardstaff, Hutton, Place, M. P. Donnelly and M. M. Walford had averages in the sixties speaks eloquently of the limitations of English bowling, even bearing in mind the long spell of hard pitches. It was certainly reassuring up to a point that so many among the leading bowlers were spinners, rather than in-swingers, but the sad truth was that J. C. Clay and Tom Goddard, the only man to take two hundred wickets, were not far short of fifty.

Though Kent and Lancashire had strong sides, perhaps a little stronger even in point of all-round skill than Gloucester, who were not out of the race until after their defeat in a great battle against Middlesex at Cheltenham that unfortunately coincided with the last Test, there was no disputing who were the side of the year. To support Compton and Edrich Middlesex had a splendid opening partnership in Robertson and Brown, both of whom reached two thousand, and, if the bowling had its limitations, Young, slow left-arm, was a sure and steady foundation, as his 159 wickets for seventeen apiece in a dry summer surely testify. Above all, Middlesex were brilliantly led by Robins in his last season as captain. It was this latter coincidence that made the victory so appropriate, for none has had a stronger or more invigorating influence on modern county cricket than he.





## CHAPTER XXXII

### SOME GENERAL REFLECTIONS

THE facility with which first-class cricket seemed to resume its full stride after the first World War was at once a surprise and relief to its lovers in England. After the ill-considered and, as it proved, wholly unnecessary experiment of two-day matches in 1919, the fine weather and gates of 1920, a keen fight for the championship, and above all the prolific scoring of our leading professionals, combined to rout the last of the Jeremiahs. Yet six months later our confidence was shaken and within a year disillusionment was complete.

It is, of course, easy to be wise after the event; but, even before defeat began to drive the lesson home, a dispassionate consideration of our position might very well have occasioned grave misgivings. In the first place, the success of our best batsmen should not have blinded us to—it should, indeed, have suggested and been somewhat discountenanced by—the true state of our attack. Never, perhaps, since cricket became a business, had English bowling been so bad. Men, such as Rhodes and Quaife, openly stated that never had they found run-getting so easy as in the two summers after the War, when, by all the laws of Nature, they must have been well past their best. This they attributed not merely to the absence of great bowlers, but primarily to the widespread and deep-rooted indifference of bowlers as a whole to that first law of their existence—length; moreover, though some county elevens were welcome exceptions, the general standard of fielding, particularly of throwing, was low.

Furthermore, this weakness in our out-cricket had inevitably reacted on our batting. Easy achievement makes but poor schooling, and, for all the high scoring that prevailed, much of our batting was on unsound lines.

The brilliant success of Prince Ranjitsinhji, as he then was, may well have provided the original impetus in favour of back-play as the basis of defence, but the habit of facing down the pitch in playing back and of “backing-up” with both legs in front of the wicket had largely originated in an attempt to counter the South African googly bowling. It had been further reinforced by the immense increase of swerve-bowling: in meeting the best of which

the batsman was forced to delay his stroke, if possible, until the psychological moment when the ball changed direction.

As long ago as 1910, Lord Harris had inveighed against the "new batting," but cricket had not long got into its post-war stride when it became obvious that the specific had now become the general, and that a method, necessary enough, perhaps, to meet certain contingencies, was in a fair way to vitiate the first principles of batsmanship.

The older generation of cricketers grew dismayed at the spectacle of batsman after batsman, on a true wicket and against ordinary medium-paced bowling, persistently getting back upon his stumps and meeting with a stab back-stroke the well-pitched-up ball which many of his predecessors would have driven to the boundary. To the defence that they "did not understand the swerve," they could fairly rejoin that there were plenty of swervers fifteen years ago; that even if there were more to-day their swerve was neither so accurately controlled, nor so long maintained that it should be allowed to dominate the game; and, finally, that, however effective the new method of defence might be, the price it exacted was too high. The great batsmen, Hobbs and Woolley, for instance, kept it firmly in its place, using it, when necessary, as a useful servant, but never allowing it to encroach upon their attack. But for lesser men the two-shouldered method spelt a fatal surrender; with the loss of the cut and the drive as an inevitable corollary, they had bartered away two of their greatest assets, had gone far to present the bowler with the moral ascendancy of attack, and robbed their art, as a spectacle, of most of its charm.

The pendulum was to swing as it always has in cricket history, and we were to enjoy the triumphs of the last days of 1926 and of Chapman's and Jardine's tours in Australia—only to be plunged back into gloom again when in sixteen months we had to haul down our colours to Australia, South Africa, and the West Indies in succession.

Retrospect of the period between the Wars enforces the conclusion that our successes were won chiefly by the old masters—and nothing was more striking than the way they kept the years at bay—and by loyalty to the sovereign cricket virtues of correct footwork in batting, length and flight in bowling, first-class fielding and catching. And nothing in the revival of the later 'thirties was more encouraging than the way in which our leading champions, Hammond, Hardstaff, Barnett, and the new generation in Compton, Hutton, Edrich and Yardley, to mention the most prominent, illustrated once again the first principles of batting. *Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*, the old definition runs; and truth is not the less true for being elementary, nor the less valuable because it has the countenance of age.

It is certainly the case that since 1919 our batsmen have been faced with a new bowling technique; an in-swinger bowled just short of a length to a largely leg-side field has been, on the whole, an effective if negative measure; it has robbed the game of most of its most beautiful strokes and cramped all but the best batsmen; but to the best, and notably our Australian enemies, it has definitely failed to dictate. All through the period, and most noticeably in international cricket, matches were won by pace and by the googly; but whereas the former when we could command it has proved almost as formidable to the Australians as to ourselves, the googly has found us only too often helpless and our enemy not only undismayed but punitive. No one would really compare Freeman with Mailey, Grimmett, and O'Reilly, and in Australian Tests he proved wholly ineffective; yet in the last ten years of his bowling life he captured 2,379 wickets, a record quite unapproached by any modern bowler. When we remember that, as often as not, our batsmen allowed him, and *a fortiori* the Australians, to bowl with a silly point and silly mid-on and no man out, surely the case is complete.

Another feature of modern cricket which demands attention is the tendency to "split the field" between the off and the on. In part this has been due to the increasing capacity and desire of medium-paced bowlers to employ both swings, but also in large measure to the paucity of strokes that most batsmen opposed to them could command. The spectacle of a bowler bowling to a field geometrically divided between the off and the leg sides, with two men only, a silly mid-on and a square cover, in front of the wicket, would have been incomprehensible to an earlier generation; yet given any life in the wicket such tactics often dominated a county match. Nevertheless, they are unsound on ultimate cricket standards, and the Oval Test Match in 1934 saw their conclusive exposure, when for hour after hour Bradman and Ponsford nit the ball with imperturbable impartiality into the wide open spaces on both sides of the wicket. You cannot in one and the same over bowl out-swingers to batsmen who can cut and in-swingers to masters of on-side play. It is significant that the Australians went some way to counter Hammond's masterly off-strokes by attacking his leg stump and placing their field accordingly, and it is arguable that a reversion to something like the old off-theory might give a present-day Australian team something to think about; the better the batsman the more true is it that the ball which leaves the bat spells the greatest danger.

The mention of that sad day at the Oval in 1934 suggests another thought: late in the evening, after hours of mastery, Bradman and Ponsford were still picking up their short singles, still calling "two" for their cuts towards deep third man. Physical fitness is an essential condition of sustained cricket achievement, and the

Australians have generally been, and looked like, trained athletes as well as cricketers.

Dictators are the order of the day, but neither Duce nor Führer has dominated his own sphere more completely or dramatically than Don Bradman has his. In the ten Test Match seasons in which he has taken part he has annexed innumerable records—the highest score ever made in first-class cricket (452), the highest score made by any Australian against both England and South Africa (334 and 299 not out), the greatest aggregate in a Test Rubber (974 in 1946–47) and the highest average (178 v. West Indies in 1947–48), the highest aggregate and average for all Test Match cricket (4,520 runs: average 93.87), and the greatest number of Test Match centuries—27, of which eleven have exceeded 200. But even these figures do not suggest his supremacy as convincingly as does the fact that of the 48 Test Matches in which he has played Australia has only won five in which he has failed to make 100.

Such figures alone prove that not since W.G. in the '70's has any cricketer so dominated his generation. And when we remember the remorseless glare of publicity that has attended his every innings and the strain of living permanently on a pedestal and ranking with Sydney Bridge and Harbour as the wonder of a continent, we may well marvel at the measure of self-control and simplicity which he has preserved. Genius defies analysis, but no one can watch a long innings by Bradman without realizing some of his outstanding assets: a quite abnormally quick reaction, commanding immediate obedience from a perfectly co-ordinated body to the message of an icily concentrated mind: eyes, feet and wrists that see and work just a fraction quicker than the "ordinarily great" player's, and so enable him to meet with ease the most delayed threat of speed or swing and to force ordinary length bowling almost where he wills through the gaps in the field: a repertoire of strokes so elastic that those gaps must always be there, and yet so subordinated to his judgment that he can for hours cut out any that may involve unwarrantable risk. Add to this immense determination, seemingly inexhaustible physical endurance, and a genius for adapting his play to the changing tactical situation.

It may be that Bradman has not the sheer grace of Victor Trumper, the versatility on all wickets of Jack Hobbs, the annihilating unorthodoxy of Gilbert Jessop, but for sheer ruthless efficiency no cricketer in the post-Grace era can compare with him. In the many pictures that I have stored in my mind from the "burnt-out Junes" of forty years, there is none more dramatic or compelling than that of his small serenely-moving figure in its big-peaked green cap coming out of the pavilion shadows into the sunshine, with the concentration, ardour and apprehension of surrounding thousands centred upon him and the destiny of a Test Match in his hands.

Whatever the defects of modern English batting in international cricket, its exponents could certainly argue its effectiveness against the great bulk of the domestic attack it has had to meet. Against bowling that only too often has been content with negative tactics, or has failed to build artifice on the basis of length, batsmen went on their way with progressive rejoicing until the fine season of 1928 produced such an orgy of run-getting (there were 414 centuries in first-class cricket) that the authorities felt that something must be done. The result was the larger wicket and the extension of the l.b.w. rule to cover "the snick." These provisions made surprisingly little difference, and 1935, after hot debate, saw the experimental application of "l.b.w.(N)" whereby the batsman could be out to a ball pitching outside the line of the off stump provided the part of his person hit was between wicket and wicket.

Many cricketers of judgment and experience had prophesied that such an alteration would render the task of the umpire invidious to the point of impossibility, and batting so difficult on sticky wickets that matches would be finished in a day and a half and county exchequers further impoverished. The event disproved such forebodings, and though the change did not have the hoped-for effect of encouraging off-side play, it did do something to restore the balance between bat and ball. *Wisden's* year after year, under the most able direction of its successive editors, Messrs. Pardon, Stewart-Caine and Southerton, had denounced the growth of pad-play, and after the season of 1936 was able to congratulate F. G. J. Ford, the tireless advocate of reform in the counsels of the M.C.C., on the success that had attended his efforts. In that season there had been an increase of over 10 per cent in finished games in the county-championships, the number of batsmen to score over 2,000 runs had dropped from 19 to 7, and of the 1,560 convictions under Law 24, 483 were under the new provision. The reality of the problem may be realized by comparing these figures with the 921 l.b.w.'s of 1923, the 451 of 1910, and the 219 of 1890! The extreme advocates of reform now wish to extend its application to the leg-side of the wicket as well, but that will surely prove a much thornier problem.

Meanwhile, some bowlers had made an effort to help themselves, but unfortunately by means that failed to command approval. To assist the swing some of them had developed the habit of "lifting the seam," and before the season of 1926 the M.C.C. felt called upon to issue an instruction to umpires that this practice was illegal.

Seven years later came the far more serious issue of "body-line," or, to give it its English name, "direct attack" bowling. After the deplorable controversy of the winter of 1932-33, little or nothing was seen of these tactics in the English season of 1933: Larwood was incapacitated, and the vitality and pace of Voce had

been severely impaired by his exertions overseas. Nevertheless, M.C.C. had passed a resolution that "any form of bowling which is obviously a direct attack by the bowler upon the batsman would be an offence against the spirit of the game." In November of that year the resolution was endorsed by the Advisory County Cricket Council, at which 14 out of 17 county captains were present and the remaining three represented.

There, it was hoped, the matter had ended, but the next season provided a rude awakening, and must go down to history as one of the most unpleasant in the history of the game. Into what all cricket lovers hoped would be a sporting and happy summer the irresponsible section of the Press leapt with insatiable lust for copy. Old controversies were rekindled; Larwood was persuaded into ostracizing himself from Test cricket; the M.C.C. were viciously attacked, and the whole atmosphere of the cricket field poisoned. The Australians, with old wounds thus violently re-opened, did not help matters by some quite unworthy attitudinizing at the crease, but they had good cause for resentment in their experience at Nottingham, and in many pavilions intimidation was the talk of the day. In March 1935 the M.C.C. once more specifically condemned this bowling and issued to umpires precise instructions as to the steps to be taken against its future practice.

The dust of this most unpleasant controversy has now settled, let us hope for good, but before leaving it, let us quote again the verdict of *Wisden's* in 1934, where its editor expressed the hope that the bowling developed in Australia might never be exploited in this country: because

- (i) it is definitely dangerous;
- (ii) it creates ill-feeling between rival teams;
- (iii) it involves reprisals;
- (iv) it has a bad influence on our great game of cricket.
- (v) it eliminates practically all the best strokes in batting.

The elaborate preparation of wickets has provoked increasing criticism. As early as 1901 the M.C.C. had remarked upon it, and in 1926 Mr. Pardon began a crusade against it. To the groundsman's boast that his wicket could "last a fortnight," the pertinent retort could be made: "Who wants it to do so?" In the 1938 *Wisden*, Mr. Allen entered the lists in an interesting article, and opinion is hardening that nothing would do more for the game and public interest in it than the control by county committees—or probably sub-committees—of their groundsmen's very natural zeal. In some places indeed this state of things now persists, to the advantage of everyone.

With his usual longheadedness, D. R. Jardine once said that, in appraising a cricketer's true value, it was his custom to look up his performances against the northern sides, and nothing in county

cricket since 1919 has been more remarkable than the sustained and decisive superiority of the north over the south.

Until the success of Middlesex in 1947 no Southern County had won the Championship for a quarter of a century. Notts headed the list in 1929, Derby in 1936; otherwise the Red and White Roses have shared the honours.

What is the explanation of this ascendancy? Partly, we may believe, the influence of a great tradition from the past; partly in inherited talent from that distant generation of piece-workers who in cricket's middle ages produced a ceaseless stream of professional bowlers; largely from the reservoir of the Leagues and the stern training ground they provide; but most of all, surely, from a certain integrity of cricket spirit, a toughness of fibre, and readiness to submit to arduous practice and discipline; the qualities that brought Paynter out of a sick-bed to win a Test Match, and that tighten Leyland's jaw when things are going awry. These are the armour for combat, and in them English cricket must clothe itself to command victory.

#### FOSTERING CRICKET

The situation in which cricket finds itself to-day has many parallels with the period following the first World War: vast public interest, and larger crowds for county matches than have ever been seen before: prolific run-scoring, due to a general weakness both in bowling technique and the wider strategy of attack. Again, too, and happily, English cricket has at its doorstep a powerful Australian team to provide the acid test, by which it may, in large degree, adjust its values.

As ever, problems confront us; practical problems such as the re-equipping of grounds after the damage resulting from war, and in many cases their enlargement to cope with the crowds; theoretical problems inseparable from a living art that is always evolving, even if its basic principles remain constant. The adjustment of the balance between bat and ball is a duty that will remain vital so long as cricket is played.

The economic revolution hits cricket, as it hits all other institutions. The blend of amateur and professional upon which the character of first-class cricket in the past has so strongly depended is going to be difficult to maintain. Under the present county system it is hard to see how the amateur strain can be kept strong, though in this regard a practical encouragement and care of University cricket, as the forcing-house which gives a young man the best experience, could accomplish much. Again, bigger professional staffs, especially on the present scale of wages, postulate ever larger "gates." The present boom, if history is a guide, may not outlive



the opportunities of alternative leisure diversions which returning prosperity may be expected to bring with it.

During this expanding period those who are charged with the control of cricket in all its branches would do well to build a wider foundation of knowledge and interest by extending the opportunity for playing in good conditions to every man and boy, irrespective of his circumstances. The provision of good pitches, which in practice means recourse to matting or to concrete, or both; a coaching scheme: both of these on a national scale are highly desirable developments: more, they are necessities if cricket is truly to reflect our democratic way of life.

The late Lord Harris speaking to the half-day cricketer said: "You do well to love it, for it is more free from anything sordid, anything dishonourable than any game in the world. To play it keenly, honourably, generously, self-sacrificingly is a moral lesson in itself, and the class-room is God's air and sunshine. Foster it, my brothers, so that it may attract all who can find the time to play it; protect it from anything that would sully it, so that it may grow in favour with all men." The cricket that really matters is the game that Englishmen play the world over because they cannot help it, because it answers some need deep set in their blood and their hearts. The past few years have made clear that its hold on the English-speaking peoples is as strong as ever: amid the stresses and hazards of war they have continued to play it wherever and whenever opportunity offered, alike in bomb-scarred London as in Iceland, in New Guinea, in the prison-camps of Germany, Italy and Siam, on the sands of the African desert, in liberated Belgium and Holland, and even on an airfield captured not long after D-day, where extra-cover had to divide his attention between the batsmen and an unexploded mine. For in it they found not only distraction and relaxation, not only a memory of a saner world, but a symbol of the values for which they risked and gave their lives.

For, in the words of a great lover of the game, Andrew Lang: "It is simply the most catholic and diffused, the most innocent, kindly and manly of popular pleasures. It is a liberal education in itself, and demands temper and justice and perseverance. There is more teaching in the playground than the schoolrooms, and a lesson better worth learning very often. For there can be no good or enjoyable cricket without enthusiasm—without sentiment, one may almost say: a quality that enriches life and refines it, gives it what life more and more is apt to lose, zest."

## APPENDIX

### I. ENGLAND *v.* AUSTRALIA

#### TEST SERIES RESULTS

<i>Season.</i>	<i>Where Played.</i>	<i>Result.</i>	<i>Season.</i>	<i>Where Played.</i>	<i>Result.</i>
1876-77	A	Draw 1-1	1901-02	A	Australia 4-1
1878-79	A	Australia 1-0	1902	E	Australia 2-1
1880	E	England 1-0	1903-04	A	England 3-2
1881-82	A	Australia 2-0	1905	E	England 2-0
1882	E	Australia 1-0	1907-08	A	Australia 4-1
1882-83	A	Draw 2-2	1909	E	Australia 2-1
1884	E	England 1-0	1911-12	A	England 4-1
1884-85	A	England 3-2	1912	E	England 1-0
1886	E	England 3-0	1920-21	A	Australia 5-0
1886-87	A	England 2-0	1921	E	Australia 3-0
1887-88	A	England 1-0	1924-25	A	Australia 4-1
1888	E	England 2-1	1926	E	England 1-0
1890	E	England 2-0	1928-29	A	England 4-1
1891-92	A	Australia 2-1	1930	E	Australia 2-1
1893	E	England 1-0	1932-33	A	England 4-1
1894-95	A	England 3-2	1934	E	Australia 2-1
1896	E	England 2-1	1936-37	A	Australia 3-2
1897-98	A	Australia 4-1	1938	E	Draw 1-1
1899	E	Australia 1-0	1946-47	A	Australia 3-0

N.B.—Five matches have constituted each series since 1897-98, except in the case of the 1912 Triangular Tournament.

### II. THE UNIVERSITY MATCH

1827 Drawn	1852 Ox. Inns. & 77	1869 Cam. 58 runs
1829 Ox. 115 runs	1853 Ox. Inns. & 19	1870 Cam. 2 runs
1836 Ox. 121 runs	1854 Ox. Inns. & 8	1871 Ox. 8 wkts.
1838 Ox. 98 runs	1855 Ox. 3 wkts.	1872 Cam. Inns. & 166
1839 Cam. Inns. & 125	1856 Cam. 3 wkts.	1873 Ox. 3 wkts.
1849 Cam. 63 runs	1857 Ox. 81 runs	1874 Ox. Inns. & 92
1841 Cam. 8 runs	1858 Ox. Inns. & 38	1875 Ox. 6 runs
1842 Cam. 162 runs	1859 Cam. 28 runs	1876 Cam. 9 wkts.
1843 Cam. 54 runs	1860 Cam. 3 wkts.	1877 Ox. 10 wkts.
1844 Drawn	1861 Cam. 133 runs	1878 Cam. 238 runs
1845 Cam. 6 wkts.	1862 Cam. 8 wkts.	1879 Cam. 9 wkts.
1846 Ox. 3 wkts.	1863 Ox. 8 wkts.	1880 Cam. 115 runs
1847 Cam. 138 runs	1864 Ox. 4 wkts.	1881 Ox. 135 runs
1848 Ox. 23 runs	1865 Ox. 114 runs	1882 Cam. 7 wkts.
1849 Cam. 3 wkts.	1866 Ox. 12 runs	1883 Cam. 7 wkts.
1850 Ox. 127 runs	1867 Cam. 5 wkts.	1884 Ox. 7 wkts.
1851 Cam. Inns. & 4	1868 Cam. 168 runs	1885 Cam. 7 wkts.

1886 Ox. 133 runs	1904 Drawn	1925 Drawn
1887 Ox. 7 wkts.	1905 Cam. 40 runs	1926 Cam. 34 runs
1888 Drawn	1906 Cam. 94 runs	1927 Cam. 116 runs
1889 Cam. Inns. & 105	1907 Cam. 5 wkts.	1928 Drawn
1890 Cam. 7 wkts.	1908 Ox. 2 wkts.	1929 Drawn
1891 Cam. 2 wkts.	1909 Drawn	1930 Cam. 205 runs
1892 Ox. 5 wkts.	1910 Ox. Inns. & 126	1931 Ox. 8 wkts.
1893 Cam. 266 runs	1911 Ox. 74 runs	1932 Drawn
1894 Ox. 8 wkts.	1912 Cam. 3 wkts.	1933 Drawn
1895 Cam. 134 runs	1913 Cam. 4 wkts.	1934 Drawn
1896 Ox. 4 wkts.	1914 Ox. 194 runs	1935 Cam. 195 runs
1897 Cam. 179 runs	1919 Ox. 45 runs	1936 Cam. 8 wkts.
1898 Ox. 9 wkts.	1920 Drawn	1937 Ox. 7 wkts.
1899 Drawn	1921 Cam. Inns. & 24	1938 Drawn
1900 Drawn	1922 Cam. Inns. & 100	1939 Ox. 45 runs
1901 Drawn	1923 Ox. Inns. & 227	1946 Ox. 6 wkts.
1902 Cam. 5 wkts.	1924 Cam. 9 wkts.	1947 Drawn
1903 Ox. 268 runs		

## III. CHAMPION COUNTY

1873 { Gloucester	1892 Surrey	1919 Yorkshire
1874 { Notts	1893 Yorkshire	1920 Middlesex
1875 Derbyshire	1894 Surrey	1921 Middlesex
1876 Notts	1895 Surrey	1922 Yorkshire
1876 Gloucester	1896 Yorkshire	1923 Yorkshire
1877 Gloucester	1897 Lancashire	1924 Yorkshire
1878 Middlesex	1898 Yorkshire	1925 Yorkshire
1879 { Notts	1899 Surrey	1926 Lancashire
1880 { Lancashire	1900 Yorkshire	1927 Lancashire
1881 Notts	1901 Yorkshire	1928 Lancashire
1881 Lancashire	1902 Yorkshire	1929 Notts
1882 { Notts	1903 Middlesex	1930 Lancashire
1883 { Lancashire	1904 Lancashire	1931 Yorkshire
1883 Notts	1905 Yorkshire	1932 Yorkshire
1884 Notts	1906 Kent	1933 Yorkshire
1885 Notts	1907 Notts	1934 Lancashire
1886 Notts	1908 Yorkshire	1935 Yorkshire
1887 Surrey	1909 Kent	1936 Derbyshire
1888 Surrey	1910 Kent	1937 Yorkshire
1889 { Surrey	1911 Warwickshire	1938 Yorkshire
1890 { Lancashire	1912 Yorkshire	1939 Yorkshire
1891 { Notts	1913 Kent	1946 Yorkshire
1890 Surrey	1914 Surrey	1947 Middlesex
1891 Surrey		

The Authors and Publishers alike regret that owing to technical difficulties and a desire not to delay the publication of this 1948 edition, it has been impossible to revise the index or to extend it to cover Chapters XXXI and XXXII.

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